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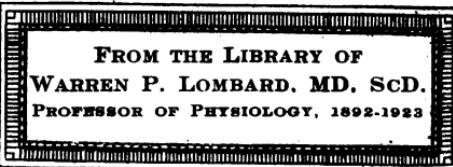
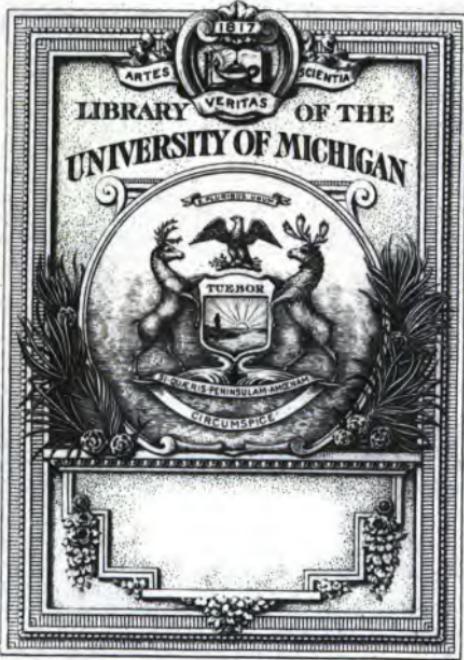
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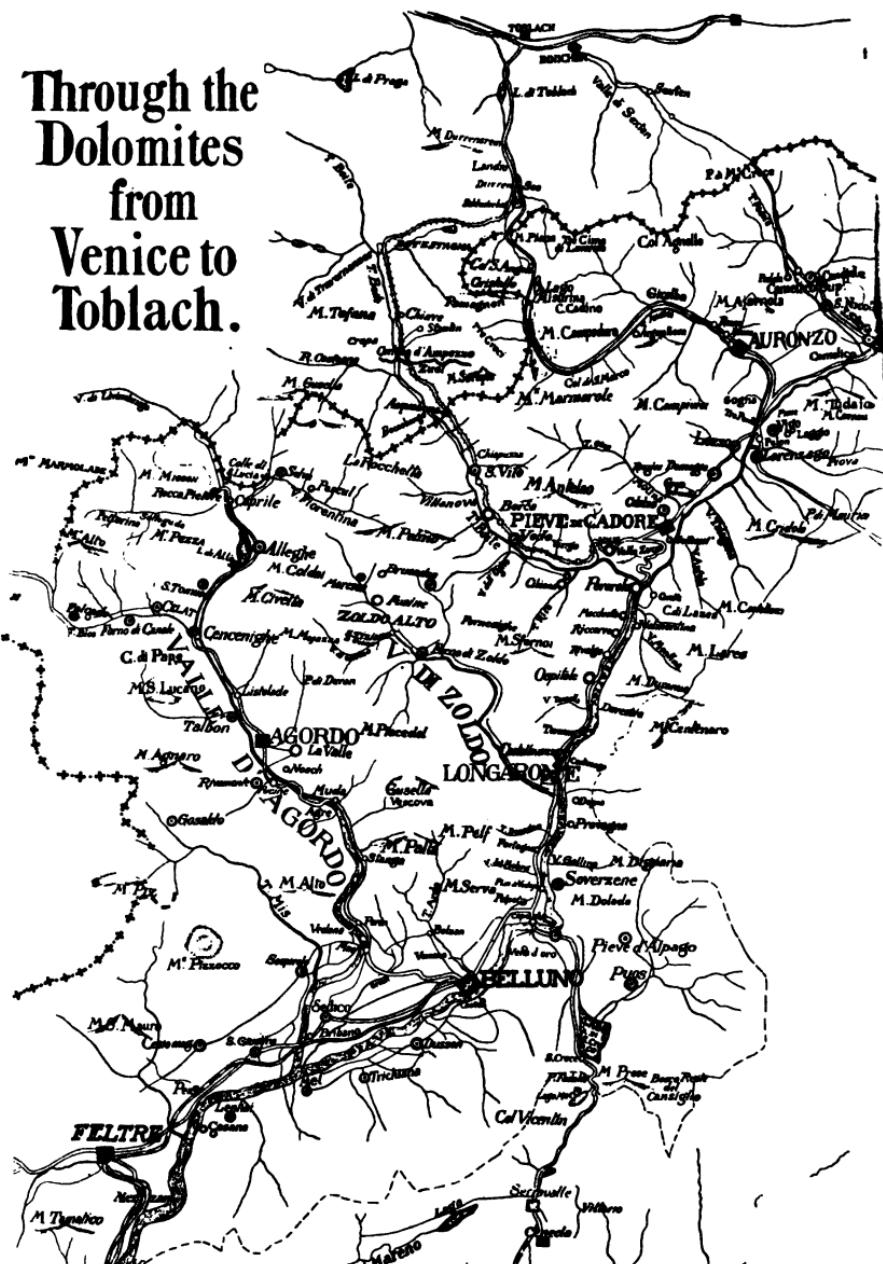
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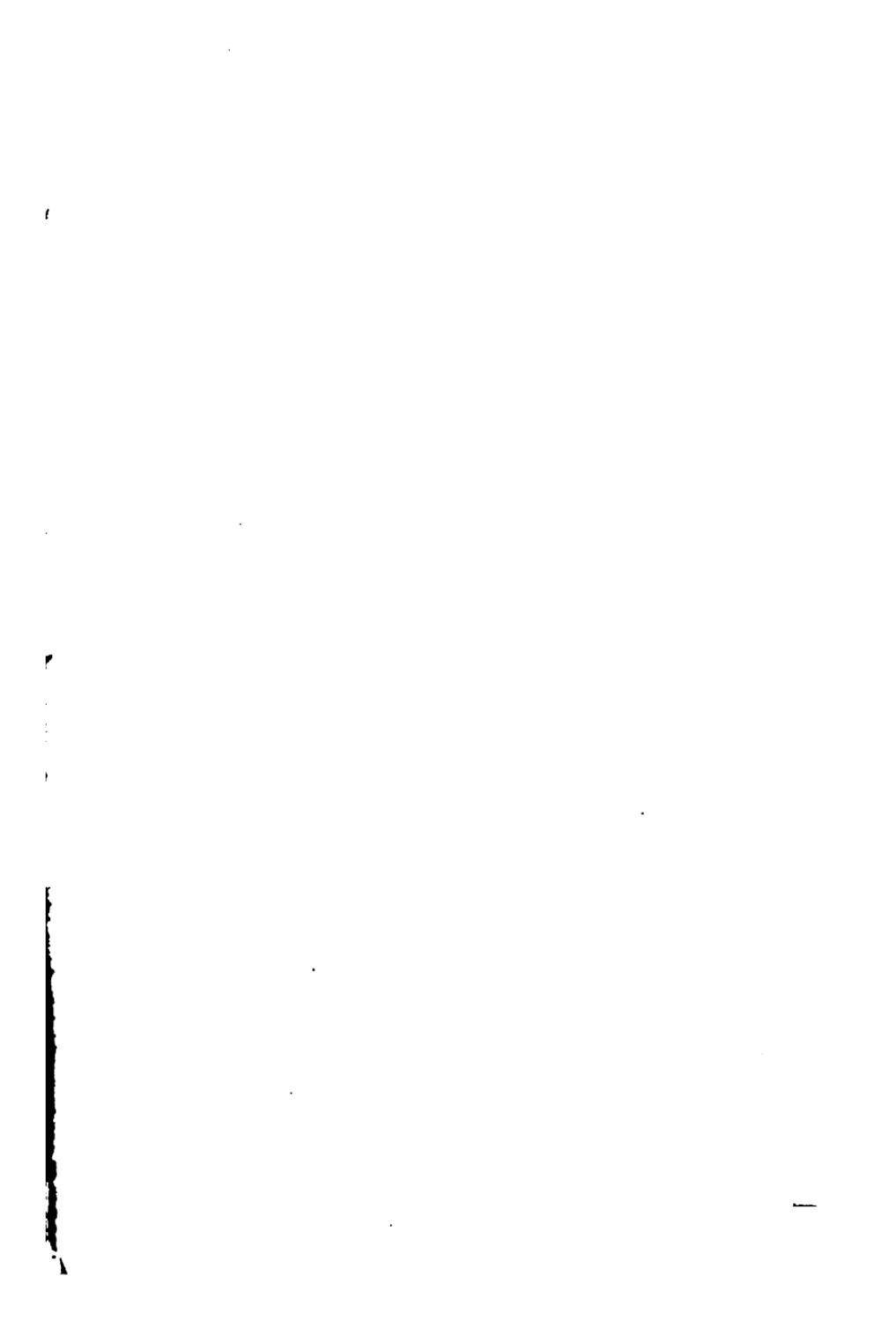


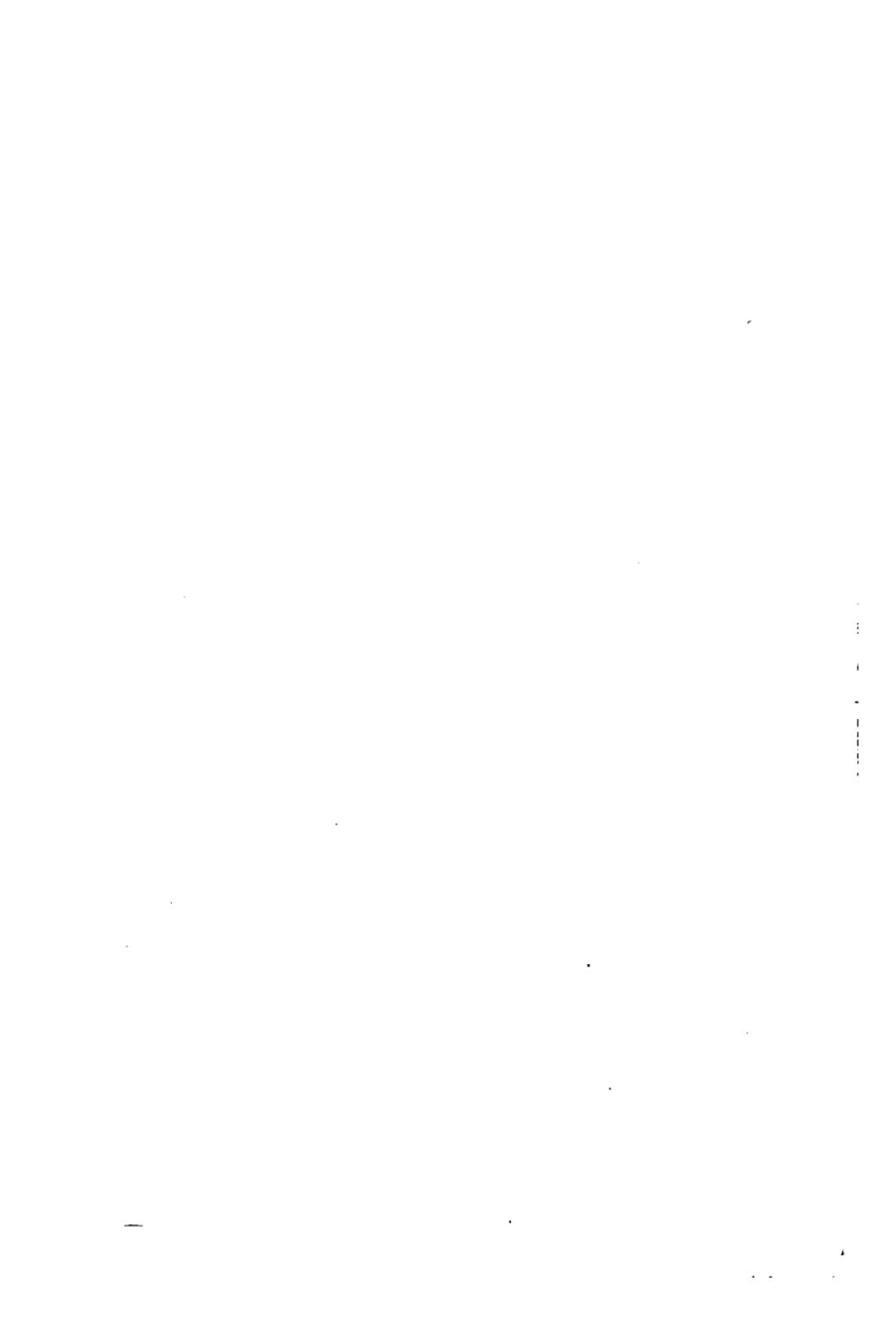
THROUGH THE DOLOMITES
FROM VENICE TO TOBLACH
A PRACTICAL, HISTORICAL, AND DESCRIPTIVE
GUIDE-BOOK TO THE
SCOTLAND OF ITALY



THE DOLOMITES, SEEN FROM VENICE.
(From a drawing by W. Logsdail, Esq.)







THROUGH THE DOLOMITES

FROM VENICE TO TOBLACH

BY

ALEXANDER ROBERTSON, D.D.

AUTHOR OF

"FRA PAOLO SARPI," "LIFE OF COUNT CAMPEDOLO," ETC.

WITH FORTY-TWO FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAP



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TO

MY FELLOW-TRAVELLER

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P R E F A C E

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TITIAN's custom of going in the summer-time from heated Venice to the cool Dolomite Mountains—The Scotland of Italy—that stand so invitingly within sight of the city, is one that Venetians practised long before the painter's day, and which they have kept up ever since. Our fellow-countrymen who live in Venice have not been slow in learning the same habit; whilst English and American travellers, in annually increasing numbers, are learning to prefer an invigorating drive "THROUGH THE DOLOMITES," from Venice to Toblach, to a hot, dusty, railway journey to Milan. I, myself, am responsible for sending not a few by this mountain route, for ever since I first knew the country, now some ten years ago, I have never failed to sing its praises, nor are, I think, these praises undeserved, for, whilst many have told me that they looked back on their journey through these wonderful mountains, as one of the most enjoyable parts of their Italian tour, or have said in substance, what a Scottish lady once wrote to me, "I am twenty years younger since I went to the Dolomites, and I shall go to them every year," I have never known one who expressed a feeling of disappointment with that country, which, because of its character and that of its people, and the legendary and historic romance that surrounds them, I have called "THE SCOTLAND OF ITALY."

Many, however, have lamented the lack of a modern book giving practical information in regard to travelling in that highland region, and also dealing with it historically and descriptively, more especially with those parts of it, traversed by the great Piave and Boite Valleys, which are to-day, what they have been for centuries, the grand natural highway "Through the Dolomites."

The following pages have been written in the hope that they may supply this want. Whilst in them I treat mainly of that highway, I have not confined myself to it, but have asked the traveller to go with me up side valleys, and to make not a few excursions and climbs, so as to visit scenes of natural beauty and historic interest.

Unlike ordinary country towns and villages, those of the Dolomites are all historic places, each with its archives well stored with ancient documents—some of which date back nearly a thousand years ; and it is with pleasure I acknowledge the courtesy of the authorities, and of Professor Ronzon, who gave me access to them, and put me in the way of obtaining much valuable information. I also desire to thank those who have kindly helped by illustrations to embellish the book—Mr. William Logsdail, who specially prepared the frontispiece ; Mr. Henry Griffith Keasbey, for the use of his pictures of scenery around Cortina ; Mr. H. Young of Asolo ; and the photographers who gave me permission to reproduce their views.

It only remains for me to express the hope that my book may be found useful by those visiting the Dolomites, and be the means of leading others thither ; and that it may make many feel, as I did, when wandering from place to place amongst sublime forms of natural beauty, and amongst a people who have inherited a glorious history and a glorious country, which have moulded and polished their characters, and made them what they are—enthusiastic lovers of liberty, of education, and of virtue—how true Mr. Ruskin's words are, that mountains “ seem to have been built for the human race, as at once their schools and cathedrals ; full of treasures of illuminated manuscript for the scholar, kindly in simple lessons for the worker, quiet in pale cloisters for the thinker, and glorious in holiness for the worshipper.”

ALEXANDER ROBERTSON.

VENICE, *May 1896.*

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THROUGH THE DOLOMITES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A SIGHT that never fails to impress the traveller in Venice is that of the great mountains which bound the horizon to the north. They are not always visible, for the moisture-laden atmosphere of the intervening lagoons and plains often hides them from view. But whenever seen, whether in winter and early spring, when they are covered with snow, or in summer and autumn, when rank behind rank appears against the clear blue sky, they always fascinate and delight.

They are the advanced guard of the wonderful Dolomites that form the boundary between Italy and Austria. What Venice is among cities, these Dolomites are among mountains. Both are unique of their kind. The whole highland region is full of interest, from whatever standpoint it is looked at. The archæologist, the geologist, the historian, the ethnologist and botanist, as well as the Alpine climber, and the health and holiday seeker, may all find there an ample field for their favourite pursuits, and for the gratification of their peculiar tastes.

The term Dolomite unfortunately tells us nothing of the nature of these mountains, although it recalls the name of him who first drew scientific attention to them—*M. Dolomieu*, a famous French mineralogist. Their rocks are composed of carbonate of lime and carbonate of magnesia,

and are akin to bitter spar or pearl spar. But we are concerned now less with what they are in themselves than with what they are in appearance, although the former modifies, I daresay, to a large extent, the latter. In line and colour, in form and behaviour, they are unlike other mountains. They resemble reefs, over which may have broken, throughout long ages, the billows of an angry ocean. Some indeed think that it was the coral insect that raised them, and if so, that tiny creature, and the winds and waves that assisted at the work, have proved themselves good architects. Unlike mountains that run in ranges, each for the most part stands on its own feet, and, for that reason, although they are much lower than the mountains of Switzerland (the very highest, Antelao—"Before the people"—whose ice and snow-crowned head can be seen from Venice in a clear day, being under 11,000 feet), they still seem relatively to be much higher. Nothing can surpass the majesty and beauty of the towers and ramparts, the battlemented walls and impregnable castles, and the gracefully pinnacled cathedrals, into the forms of which their summits are built up. Their colouring is another striking characteristic; many of them are painted most brilliantly and beautifully, and rivet the eye with the richness of the deep reds, bright yellows, silvery whites, and dark blues and blacks of their rocks. Yet there is nothing hard or crude about them. All their colours are modified and softened by a peculiar soft grayish-white tint. The mountains look as if powdered with some substance less hard and cold than freshly fallen snow. It is as if a living soft lichen overspread them. If I said they were 'lathered' over, I should best describe their appearance, and at the same time state a literal fact. These magnesian-limestone rocks decompose under the influence of rain and atmosphere, and so their surfaces become 'lathered.' A bit of dolomite feels soft in the hand like a piece of soap. Hence also their instability. No one looking at them can think of the "everlasting hills." The wonder is, not that they are constantly falling, but that they hold up so well. Many of them are shattered, and are





To face p. 3.

DOLOMITE TOPS AMONG THE CLOUDS.

(From a drawing by H. G. Keasbey, Esq.)



full of gaping rents and clefts. One sees piled up against their feet huge banks of sand and stones. It looks as if the ocean, that may at one time have rolled around them, had thrown up in its fury these great white slopes. The fact is that they have been brought down from above by winter's frosts, by spring's melting snows, and by autumn's rains. Not a rain-drop falls on these mountains but does its work of disintegration and denudation. Sometimes a slice of a mountain falls and becomes a *boa*, or a river of stones, that may flow, not only for hours, but for days, covering, it may be, many hamlets, and turning the fruitful field into a wilderness. Hence it does not hold here that "streams their channels deeper wear." On the contrary, they are constantly filling them up. These mountain rivers have made the beds in which they flow across the plains of Venetia into great broad highways, raised, as in the case of the Tagliamento, twenty feet above the level of the surrounding country. The water is kept in its place by enormous dykes and banks ; and it is the bursting of these that causes the disastrous inundations from which the country so frequently suffers.

The earliest inhabitants of the Dolomite highlands were the Taurisci, and the Agonii ; the Reti and the Norici ; and the Caturigi. The two first, as their names suggest, migrated from Asia Minor and Greece, the second two from the Rhætian and Norican Alps, between the Drave and the Danube, and the last from the Cottian Alps. The date of the settlement of these tribes is lost among the traditions of primeval history. It is interesting, however, to note that there are places in the mountains that are still called Taurus and Gogna, and the names of the early settlers enter into the composition of many other words. Both Gogna and Euganean, the names of the volcanic hills near Padua, where Greeks settled over a thousand years before Christ, are thought to be from the same origin. Weapons made of stone and iron, clay urns for burial, bronze objects, and stones bearing inscriptions thought to be in the Euganean language, remain as relics of those ancient peoples.

When the Romans planted their rich and powerful colony at the head of the Adriatic, and the city of Aquileia became *Roma Secunda*, they naturally spread themselves northward and westward, so that they soon occupied the whole Dolomite country, constructing military roads and forts and castles, traces of which can still be seen. It was during their occupation, which lasted in round numbers for 500 years (from 100 B.C. to A.D. 400), that we meet the first historic mention of the country in writings that have come down to us. Polybius, the Greek historian, who wrote over a century before Christ; Livy, the most illustrious of Roman historians, who wrote about the time of Christ's birth; Strabo, the geographer, who was contemporary with Livy; and Pliny the naturalist, whose writings date from about half-a-century after Christ, all speak of them, giving us the names of the people, and of some of their mountains and rivers. Probably all four wrote from personal knowledge, for Polybius is believed to have travelled over the country with his friend Publius Cornelius Scipio, the Roman general; Pliny did the same as commander of a troop of Roman cavalry; Livy was born at Padua, within sight of the Dolomites; and Strabo is thought to have included the country in his extensive wanderings.

As it was in the north that the waves upon waves of barbarians that rolled across the sunny plains of Italy took their rise, the Dolomite region was first swept by them. Thus the Goths, or Visigoths, from the banks of the Danube, were there about A.D. 400; fifty years later Attila with his Huns displaced them; another fifty years later Theodoric with the Ostrogoths from Pannonia (Hungary) drove out the Huns. Fifty years after that, A.D. 550, Alboin with the Lombards, or Longobards, conquered the Ostrogoths; two hundred years later, A.D. 750, Charlemagne with his Franks destroyed the Lombards, and in A.D. 900 the Carlovingian dynasty became extinct, and that fusion of nations took place which formed the German Empire. During these five hundred years of revolutionary changes, the Dolomite highlands may be said to have been

held as fiefs from the barbarian conquerors, but their inhabitants enjoyed a virtual independence, and their very trials and vicissitudes consolidated them, and prepared them for the exercise of self-government, as the storms and tempests rooted and strengthened the trees of their forests. Accordingly, about the year 1000, a Constitution on republican lines was drawn up and adopted by the mountaineers, although it was not till about 1300 that the Statutes of Cadore (*Lo Statuto Cadorino*) were completed and stereotyped. Their territory embraced ten provinces. Each province elected three representatives, so that their parliament consisted of thirty members. The seat of the Government was at Pieve, in the central province of Cadore, and hence the Republic became known in history as the Republic of Cadore. This Republic was destined to endure till our own era. Only in 1807 did Napoleon decree that the Statutes of Cadore should cease to have the force of law, and that their place should be taken by his own Code.

Throughout these eight centuries Cadore was in reality free, although during the first half of it (1000-1420) it was connected with Aquileia, and during the second half (1420-1797) with Venice. The connection with Aquileia arose from the Patriarchs of that city having received a sort of suzerainty over Cadore from the German Emperors. This suzerainty they exercised for about two hundred years, by *Podestà* (civil governors) who were appointed by the Counts of Camino; and then by *Capitani* (military governors) appointed by themselves. The names of many of these *Podestà* and *Capitani* have come down to us, and one of them has a special interest. It is that of Guecello of Pozzale, a little village within a couple of miles of Pieve, who was elected *Podestà* on August 13, 1321, holding the office for the usual term of five years. As the letters "gu" are equivalent to "w," and "w" is interchangeable with "v," we find that in two generations Guecello had become Vecello, and the grandson of this first Vecello was Tiziano (Titian) the great painter, who was born at Pieve in 1477.

The connection of Cadore with Venice was brought about in 1420, when the Republic of the Mountain voluntarily joined hands with that of the Sea for mutual benefit and protection. The Venetian Government was represented at Pieve first (1420-1444) by *Capitani* chosen by the *Consiglio* of Cadore, and then (1444-1797) by *Capitani* chosen by the *Maggior Consiglio* of Venice. The names of all these *Capitani*, one hundred and forty-four in number, and various particulars regarding them, are preserved in the archives of Pieve and Venice. The list contains many historic names, and it also discloses the following curious fact, which throws light on the gradual decline of learning in Venice. At first the names were inscribed in Latin, then in Italian, and last of all in the Venetian dialect. The same decline took place in Cadore, as is shown by a number of parchments that came into my hands. These show it not only by Latin giving place to Italian, and that again to the Cadorini dialect, but by the very penmanship, which deteriorates from good to medium, and from medium to bad.

Long before the union of Cadore with Venice they had intimate commercial relations. Among the mountains were valuable silver, copper, iron, zinc, and lead mines, some of which were known to the Romans, and Venice became the chief market for these minerals. It is to be regretted that for want of fuel, and because of the difficulty of transport, the working of many of them has been stopped; although it is interesting to find that the copper mines of Agordo, above Belluno, are now owned and worked by the Italian Government; that arrangements are being made to reopen the silver and copper mines of Mount Avanza in Carnia; and that the zinc and lead mines of Argentiera (*argentum*, silver), near Auronzo (*aurum*, gold), that have been worked almost continuously for nine hundred years, present as busy a scene to-day as they ever did during those past centuries. In the same way the forests of Cadore have been celebrated in history for nearly two thousand years as practically inexhaustible sources of timber. There is reason to believe





To face p. 7.

THE FOREST OF SAN MARCO, AND THE MARMAROLE RANGE.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Cataizo.)



that it went to the construction of old Roman galleys ; and it is certain that the Romans established at several places in the mountains *Dendrofori* (schools) for the better cultivation and preservation of the trees. During the three hundred and fifty years of Longobardic and Frankish domination, the same care for these forests was manifested in their appointment of *Silvani*, whose duty it was to look after them. And then, when Venice became a great seaport, and the Venetians the world's carriers, most of the wood cut in the mountains was floated to its Lagoons, as it is to-day. Part of this wood was exported to the East, which trade still continues ; part of it was used in the construction of the fleets of Venice, in her great Arsenal ; and part of it went to the making of piles for the foundations of her palaces. Thus whole forests lie buried beneath her buildings. The heart of Venice is of Dolomite pine. Kings from the mountain forests thus sustain the throne of the Queen of the Adriatic.

After the alliance of the two Republics in 1420, their conduct towards each other was most honourable to both. The greater Republic took no advantage of the lesser, and the lesser felt no jealousy of the greater. Cadore, indeed, most loyally identified its interests with those of Venice in peace and in war. Thus the Arsenal in Venice had its duplicate on a small scale at Pieve di Cadore, and cannon were cast at different mining centres amongst the mountains. It is interesting to meet in the chronicles of the times with such notices as the following :—"On July 2, 1463, the Republic of Cadore gave to the Republic of Venice the forest of Sommadida." That forest has ever since borne the name of *Il Bosco di San Marco* (the Wood of St. Mark). It is about five miles long by two and a half miles broad, lying at the foot of the northern slopes of the great range of the Marmarole, and it is beyond question the finest forest of the region. Its timber was devoted to ship-building first by Venice, then by the French, then by the Austrians, and now by the Italian Government. Ten years later, we find the entry, "Venice conceded to Cadore the

field near *S. Francesco della Vigna* as a depository for its wood ;" and again, "In 1569 Cadore gave to Venice, then in need of a powerful fleet to send against the Turks, six hundred *bordonali* (large timbers) of larch, eight and a half paces (over forty feet) in length, and Cadore delivered them at its own expense." Further on we read, "Cadore gave to Venice, in 1576, one hundred larch trees to rebuild the Ducal Palace that has been destroyed by fire." As 1576 was the dreadful year of the plague, when half the inhabitants of Venice died, the aged Titian, who attempted too late to fly to Cadore, among the number, we know that these trees were diverted from their purpose and used to build the votive church of the *Redentore* on the *Guidecca*. Again, "Cadore sent in 1645 to the Venetian arsenal, two hundred larch trees and two hundred pines, chosen for their size and beauty from the forests of the mountains." The Republic being then at war with Candia, Venice on her part responded to her faithful friend and ally with many favours. She bestowed upon the inhabitants of Pieve di Cadore the rights of Venetian citizenship. In 1510 the Doge, Leonardo Loredan, ordered Belluno to supply victuals to the workers in the Arsenal of Pieve, and the tax on salt was reduced in favour of the Cadorins, and in 1514 we find this Doge again ordering the authorities of Belluno to send money into Cadore, to aid its people in making cannon-balls. Finally, in 1663, Venice abolished all and every tax on Cadore timber, adding that the rivers of the mountains had been often tinged with blood shed on behalf of Venice, and that these waters remained thus a living testimony to the worthiness of the Cadorins to be confirmed in this ancient privilege.

As Venice forbade the erection of a monument in face of the public to any of her sons, because it seemed to cast a slur on others not less loyal and true, so we find Cadore decreeing that none of her children should accept a patent of nobility. At a time when some other European nations were without a people, consisting only of noblemen and their retainers, Cadore was a nation of freemen and of

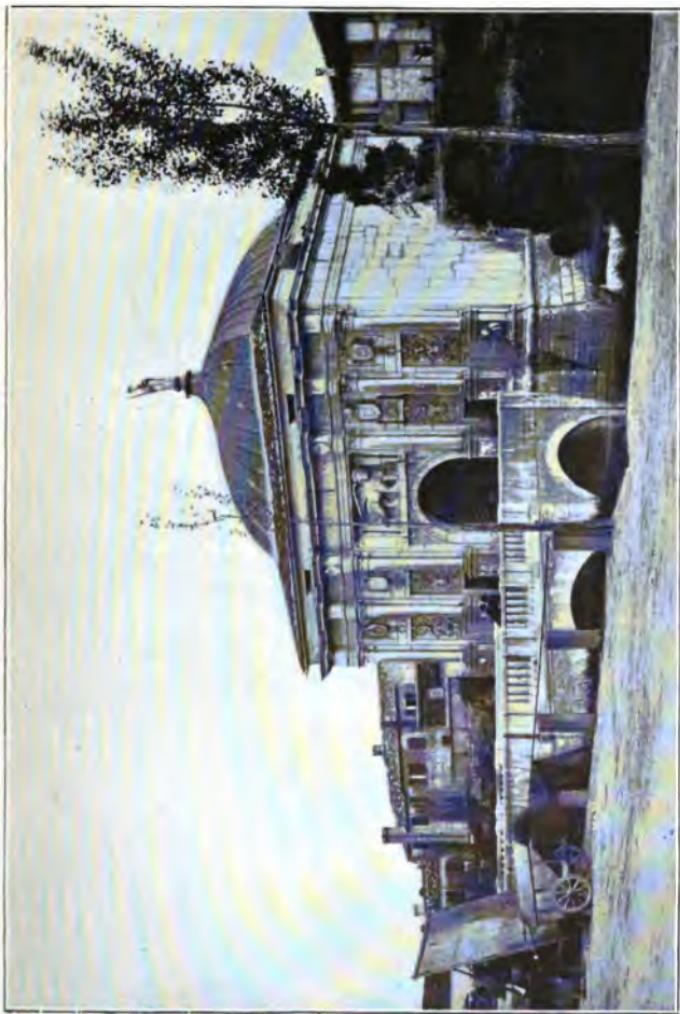
yeomen. Like Venice, too, Cadore had to pass laws to guard the civil rights of her people against clerical domination and covetousness. The property of widows and heiresses, because of its tendency to fall into the hands of the clergy, was especially safeguarded by law. Priests were declared not to be eligible for seats on councils, as they were found to be men of divided allegiance; and finally they were deprived of all civil rights, and forbidden to trespass beyond their spiritual offices. Venice was indebted to Cadore for many names illustrious on the pages of her history, in various departments of action. Marco Polo is said to have belonged to a Cadore family. Especially in the domain of art, masters whose genius shed a lustre not only on the school of Venice, but on art the world over, sprang from these mountain families. While these painters earned wealth and fame in Venice they did not forget the villages of their native highlands. Hence the works of Titian, Cima, Bassano, Pordenone, and others, that enrich the churches and galleries of the one, enrich also the churches and public buildings of the other. No fewer than eight villages possess pictures by the great Titian.

It is thus that city and mountain, Venice and the Dolomites, meet and harmonise. At the same time they offer in one aspect a splendid contrast, for no two things could be more dissimilar than the city of the lagoons and that wild highland region, and no change could be greater and more agreeable than that which Titian made during nigh fifty consecutive years of his life, when, in the height of summer, he left the hot pavements, the glaring palaces, the enervating sirocco wind, and the dark sluggish canals of Venice, for the green glades, the pine woods, the fresh breezes, the clear fountains, and the broad streams and rivers of the Highlands of Cadore.

The main highway from Venice through the Dolomites is the great natural one afforded by the Piave and Boite valleys; and it is one that figures in the history of Cadore from very early times. In the period of the alliance between the two Republics it was the great

commercial route between Italy and Germany ; but now, though it is still a local commercial thoroughfare, it serves chiefly the interests of the Alpinist and the traveller. As the whole length of this highway through these mountains is only about one hundred and forty miles, it is possible to pass over it in a summer's day. Leaving Venice in the morning one can arrive at Toblach, in the Pusterthal, in the evening, whence trains can be taken to any part of Europe. But to enjoy the beauties of the route, to see something of the people, and to understand and appreciate their character and history, it should be taken in easy stages. In these modern days good hotels and inns can be found wherever one wishes to stop. If restoration to health, or an enjoyable holiday is sought, weeks and months may be passed on the way with pleasure and profit.

Two gateways, that can be seen from Venice, pierced in the rocky Dolomite ramparts, give access to this great highway. The one is where the Piave issues into the plains to find its way to the lagoons and the sea ; the other is some miles to the eastward, at Vittorio and Serravalle. By the former the Piave Valley is entered at once ; by the latter a branch valley, that of the Meschio, fifteen miles long, is traversed, which leads into it at a point some few miles above the town of Belluno. The railway, the modern invader of these mountain fastnesses, some ten years ago ran its lines up to both gateways and knocked for admittance. A branch line was made from Conegliano (Cima's birthplace), on the Udine railway, which was carried as far as the Vittorio and Serravalle vestibule to the Dolomites, but there it had to stop. Another branch line was made from Treviso to the Piave vestibule, and there finding ready admittance it was carried along our highway as far as Belluno. Whether we enter by the one gateway or by the other we shall find much whereon to feast the eye, and to interest the mind ; but as the railway route up the Piave valley to Belluno is by far the more picturesque, and the one most frequented, by it we shall first enter the Dolomite region.

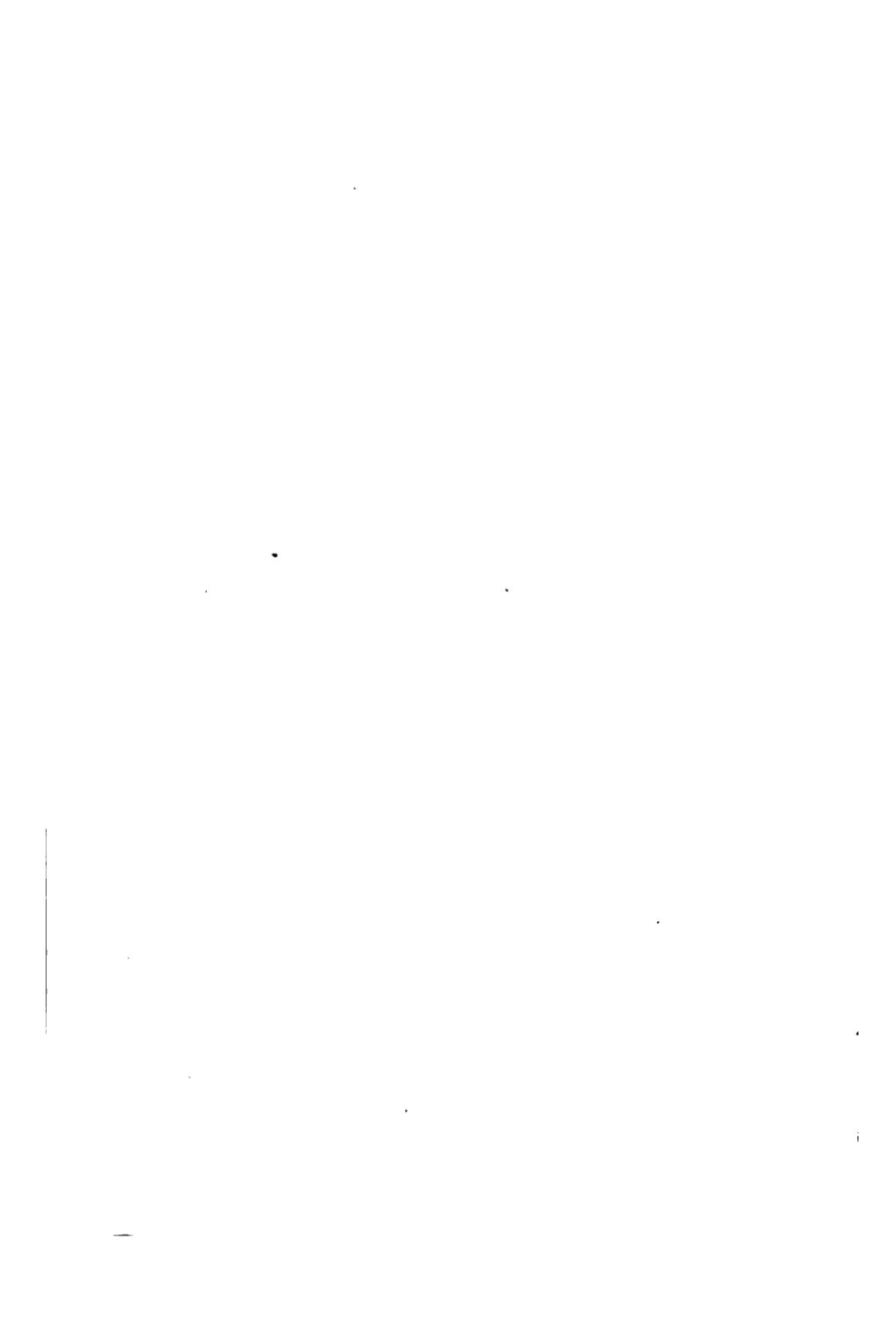


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GATE OF ST. THOMAS (NOW MAZZINI), TREVISO.

(By kind permission of Messrs. Ferretto, of Treviso.)

U. S. GOVERNMENT
PRINTING OFFICE



CHAPTER II

VENICE TO BELLUNO

Treviso—Cornuda—Asolo—Feltre

(Journey by railway ; total distance $72\frac{1}{2}$ miles ; 4 trains daily ; time 4-6 hours ; fares 13 fr. 15 c., 9 fr. 25 c., 5 fr. 95 c. Carriages changed at Treviso.

Hotels at Belluno—*Alle Alpi* (first-class English house); *Cappello* (Alpine Club).

IN the summer months the *lagune morte*, between Venice and the mainland, become the *lagune vive*. Sea-pinks, and sea-lavender, or marsh-rosemary, clothe them in rich profusion. As we passed over them on our way to the Dolomites it seemed as if the hills had divested themselves of their purple robes to spread them over the rippling surface. At **Mestre**, where we were switched off the Milan on to the Treviso line, long rows of waggons of tree-trunks and planks of wood suggested at once the forests and saw-mills of the Dolomites. Our iron-way now became a green lane of acacia hedges, beyond which stretched on either hand a rich fertile country, divided up into small maize fields by rows of mulberry trees, with leafy vines between, hanging in graceful festoons. How happy the peasants in the cosy villages, and in the old thatched cottages, and more modern red-tiled ones, which we passed, ought to be, with the supply of their more pressing needs thus laid to their hands—the maize and the vine yielding them their staple articles of food and drink, polenta and wine, and the leaves of the mulberry feeding the silkworms to spin their clothing !

Treviso

(18½ miles. Hotels—*Stella d'Oro* and *Cerva*;
rooms 2 to 3 frs.)

At **Treviso** we changed carriages, leaving the main line for the Belluno branch, and by missing a train we saw the chief objects of interest in this town, whose position, between two streams, Dante, who lived a short time here, describes in *Paradiso*, Canto IX. :—

“*E dove Sile e Cagnan s'accompagna.*”

Treviso claims to be a very ancient place, and many memorials, still in existence, of ages long gone by, support the claim. It was the old Latin *Tarvisium*, and from some inscriptions on stones that have been dug up, it appears to have been a Roman *Municipium*, and its people to have been enrolled in the tribe or township of Claudia. Passing over the intervening centuries, when it was ruled by Goths, Longobards, and Germans, and by the Eccelini, the Counts of Carnino, and the Scalieri, we come down to the year 1339, when it fell into the hands of Venice. Venice, like Rome, had a marvellous power of attaching conquered people to itself, for in 1344, five years after Treviso was subdued, we find its Council, by a unanimous and spontaneous vote, making over to Venice “their city, castles, properties, tribunals, and all their rights,” and from that time till the fall of the Republic in 1796, the people never swerved from their loyalty.

Treviso has been sorely modernised, although it has still some fine old buildings, and is in part surrounded, if not protected, by its old walls and moats, with massive gateways and shady boulevards. On a rising ground in the centre of the town, about a mile from the railway station, are the *Piazza dei Signori*, and the *Piazza dell'Indipendenza*, and around them are the chief public buildings. These are the *Provincial Palace*, the *Pinacoteca*, and the *Palace of the Grand Council of Three Hundred*. The *Provincial Palace* is a large, handsome, modern building,

with the *Tower of the Commune* rising "stately and air-braving" from its midst. The *Pinacoteca*, or Picture Gallery, contains about three hundred pictures, none of which, however, are of any great value. Many years ago the fine old twelfth-century *Palace of the Council of Three Hundred*, which divides the two *piazzas*, was "restored," by having its great outside staircase taken away, and its large Byzantine windows reduced to modern small square ones. An ugly scar witnessed to where the staircase once was, and, as is the case in dozens of palaces in Venice, the forms of the original windows showed themselves, protesting against their ungraceful supplacers. The witness and the protest have not been in vain, for the other day the Minister of Public Instruction visited Treviso, and ordered that the Hall should be restored to its original grandeur, the expense to be borne by the Government and the Province. In the centre of the *Piazza dell' Indipendenza* is a monument with the words, "*Ai Morti per la Patria*," raised to those who fell fighting the battle of independence against Austria, which, begun in 1848, only ended in 1866. On the wall of the old Palace are inscribed their names, with the words, "*Morti sul campo di battaglia, o per ferite riportate, o fucilate per l'Indipendenza d'Italia*." Thus the Italians show their gratitude to their patriot martyrs, and keep alive in their own hearts their love of liberty. As throwing light on the condition of the people, politically and intellectually, before and after the memorable year 1866, I may mention the following fact. During the sixty-eight years of Austrian rule, that is, from 1798 to 1866, no newspaper was ever published in Treviso. On October 21, 1866, the *plebiscite* was taken which united it to the Kingdom of Italy, and before the year was out *La Gazzetta* had appeared, to be followed soon after by *La Provincia di Treviso*, and then, a few years after, by the *Progresso*, the *Carriere* and others, until to-day Treviso is as well supplied with newspapers as any other provincial town.

In a street running off the *Via dell' Indipendenza* is the *Loggia dei Cavalieri*, built in 1195, which served, like the

Loggia at the foot of the *Campanile* of St. Mark's, Venice, as the meeting-place of the nobles. It is a square building with five arched entrances on either side; its roof projects, resting on carved beams, under it are coats of arms, and its walls were frescoed inside and outside. It was allowed to fall into such decay that latterly it has served as a builder's yard. Its day of restoration, however, is at hand, for the Minister of Public Instruction has given orders that it should be preserved as a national monument. The *Duomo* is a great empty building, and, with the exception of an altar-piece, which is a noble Annunciation, and a head of the Virgin by Titian, a small picture by Paris Bordone, and the Adoration of the Magi, by Pordenone, it contains little to reward examination. In the *Biblioteca* there is a fourteenth-century manuscript Bible, with beautiful letters in colour and gold, and a Dante, said to have been presented by the poet's son. The bridge "Where the Sile and Cagnano flow together" is called the *Ponte Dante*, and on it there is erected a large marble monument to the poet. By far the most interesting church in Treviso is that of *San Nicolò*. It is a noble Gothic structure erected about 1300. The first thing that strikes the eye on entering it are frescoes that circle round its massive stone pillars. They are of the same age as the church, and are thought to be the work of Tomaso of Modena. The subjects are disconnected scenes from the lives of the apostles and saints. On the southern wall is a gigantic fresco of St. Christopher, reaching almost from the floor of the church to its ceiling. The swollen waters of the river are shown rushing around him full of fish, whilst he, with the infant Christ on his shoulder, and a tree-like staff in his hand, boldly fords it. The size of the fresco is explained by the tradition that on the day one saw St. Christopher no evil would befall him, and so his figure was often painted outside a church, as well as inside, during a time of plague. This one was painted in 1410 by Antonio of Treviso. The church contains pictures by Giovanni Bellini, Palma Giovane, Bassano, Sebastiano dal Piombo, Marco Vecellio,

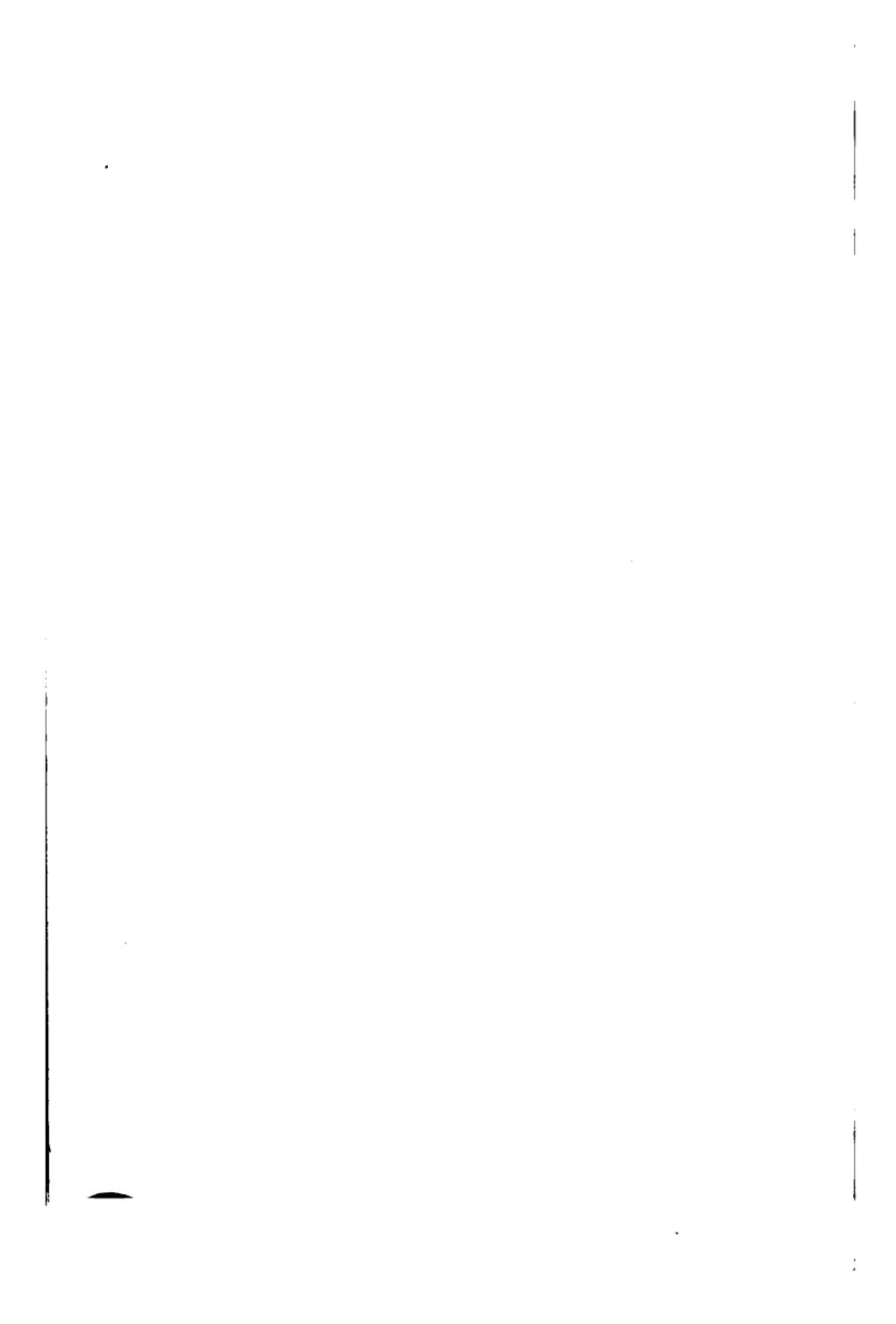


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VILLA BARBARO, MASER.

(By kind permission of Messrs. Ferretti, of Treviso.)

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the cousin of Titian, and others. On the left wall of the choir there is the famous tomb of the Roman Senator Agostino d'Onigo, erected by the Lombardi in 1491, with warriors in fresco, attributed to Giovanni Bellini, but probably the work of Jacopo de Barbari.

We left Treviso by its fine old northern gateway that not a few famous men were ambitious to have called by their name. The ruler under whom it was erected, a certain Paolo Nani, set on the pinnacle of its roof a figure of St. Paul and called it *Porta Nana*, the Republic of Venice changed it to *Porta S. Tomaso*, Buonaparte named it *Porta Napoleone*, and now it is known as *Porta Mazzini*. The gate is ornamented both towards the city and towards the country with the Lion of St. Mark, coats of arms, and figures of warriors. As we passed out of it we got a good view of the Dolomites, and the city seemed to wish us prosperity in our journey thither, for above this gateway, carved in deep lettering on its old stones, were the appropriate and beautiful words: *Dominus custodiat introitum et exitum tuum.*

The line now strikes away to the north-west in the direction of the great Piave valley. The next station but one after leaving Treviso is *Postioma*, so called from the old Roman road *Pustumia* that was constructed by the Consul Spurio Postumia Albino, 176 B.C. This road started from Aquileia, and traces of it found in different places show that it came in a straight line through this country. Some of these traces can be seen from the carriage window, running parallel with the line on its northern side.

Cornuda

(36½ miles ; Station for Maser and Asolo.)

Soon the wayside station of **Cornuda** was reached, where we again broke our journey, being desirous of seeing two places of interest in its neighbourhood, Maser, where is the *Villa Barbaro*, now *Giaccomelli*, which has splendid frescoes

by Paolo Veronese; and Asolo, associated in ancient times with the Queen of Cyprus, and in modern times with Robert Browning. Both of these places lie a few miles westward on the Bassano road. We had no difficulty in carrying out our wish, for carriages were waiting at the station ready for the conveyance of travellers to them and back for a few francs. Passing over the battle-field of Cornuda, where, in 1848, the Italians offered a brave resistance to the Austrians, a drive of two miles, along a road shadowed with vines and chestnut-trees, brought us to **Maser**.

The **Villa Barbaro**, like several we had passed on the way, stands back from the road, and has white marble statues on its entrance gates, and on the walls that line the long approach to the villa. It was built in 1565 by Daniell Barbaro, Patriarch of Aquileia, and his brother Marcantonio, a Venetian nobleman. These men engaged for its construction the most famous architect, decorator, and artist they could find, so it was planned by Andrea Palladio, ornamented by Alessandro Vittorio, and painted by Paolo Caliari (Paolo Veronese). Veronese's frescoes cover the walls and ceilings of several rooms, and represent Cleopatra and the Asp; the Marriage of St. Catherine; Time and History; Glory crowning Merit; Abundance, Strength, and Envy; the Holy Family; Virtue chaining Vice, Love conquering Strength; Faith and Charity; the Seasons; the Elements; Venus and Apollo; Bacchus on Olympus; the Council of the gods on Olympus; Maternal Love; Conjugal Virtues, portraits of the painter and his wife, and many quaint figures in old costumes. Some think that these frescoes give a better idea of the genius of Veronese than his paintings in Venice. The stucco work on the ceilings and walls, consisting of fruit, flowers, festoons of ivy, cherubs, and animals is well worth examination. There are some appropriate Latin inscriptions over the doors and fire-places.

By the roadside not far from the villa is the *Chapel*, which was built at the same time, and was planned, painted, and





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CHAPEL OF VILLA BARBARO, MASER.
(By kind permission of Signor Naya, of Venice.)

decorated by the same three great artists. Villa Barbaro is altogether an ideal house with an ideal setting. Behind it rise richly wooded hills, on one of which are the ruins of the old castle of Maser. Around its doorway palms, aloes, oleanders, and prickly pears grow luxuriantly, whilst to the south vineyards and orchards clothe the plains that stretch onwards towards Venice and the sea. Re-entering our carriage another drive of about four miles brought us within sight of Asolo.

Asolo

(7 miles from Cornuda Station. One old-fashioned but comfortable Inn, *Albergo alle Torre*; pension 6 to 8 fr. a day.)

The city of **Asolo** (for though it has but a thousand inhabitants, yet Austria raised it to the dignity of a city) lies on a hill at the head of a lateral valley, and is reached by a pleasant zig-zag road over a mile in length. Trees hid the houses from our view as we ascended, but not a strange, colossal pile of masonry, long and lofty, pierced by no window, and but by one low door, that stood out against the clear blue sky. It was *la Rocca* (the castle), supposed to have been the fortress of Asolo in the time of the Romans, for, unlike Treviso, which, as we saw, was a Roman *Municipium*, Asolo was a Roman *Colonia*. The difference between these is noteworthy. A *Municipium* was a place allied to Rome by articles of treaty, a *Colonia* was a conquered place, amongst whose inhabitants a certain number of Roman citizens, generally veteran soldiers, were settled. The inhabitants of the *Municipium* had the rights of Roman citizenship conferred upon them, those of the *Colonia* were free-born. It is interesting to find thus, at Treviso and Asolo, these two communities brought together, by which Rome maintained her supremacy in the world.

Asolo, like Treviso, and most of the cities of the plain, wore a distinctly Venetian aspect. Gothic windows and

frescoed walls looked down upon us from above arcaded streets. One of the first things that caught our eye was a marble slab let into the wall of a house, which bore the words: *In questa Casa, abito Roberto Browning, sommo poeta Inglese, vi scrisse Asolando* (In this house lived Robert Browning, a great English poet, and here he wrote "Asolando.") It is on the house of Antonietta Tabacchi, in which Mr. Browning used to lodge. His first visit to Asolo was made in 1836, when, as a young pedestrian going from place to place, he alighted upon it. Struck with the beauty of its position, of its surroundings, and of its marvellous sunsets, created, as some think, by the ascending vapours of the *Lago di Garda* and the Po valley, he spent some time here, and wrote his early poem entitled "Pippa Passes," a drama, the first scene of which opens, "New Year's Day at Asolo in the Trevisan." Pippa, which is the Italian diminutive for Philippa, is the name of a girl who worked in the silk-mills, and who used to pass singing under Mr. Browning's windows to and from her work. This New Year's Day, her annual holiday, she is made in the drama similarly to pass under the windows of the houses of leading people in Asolo, at critical moments in their lives, and, all unconscious to herself, her singing words influence them for good, awakening in them better thoughts. Pippa's first song was the well-known and beautiful one—

"The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn ;
Morning's at seven ;
The hill-side's dew-pearled ;
The lark's on the wing ;
The snail's on the thorn :
God's in His heaven—
All's right with the world !"

Browning revisited Asolo in 1878, and again in 1889, the year of his death. The place that had inspired his early poem inspired his latest, for during his last visit he finished "Asolando," which was published in London on the day

of his death. "Asolando" is a collection of poems that the poet calls "Fancies and Facts." Excepting the title, dedication, and prologue, the book has no connection with Asolo. In its dedication to a friend he says, with reference to the title, "I use it for love of the place, and in requital of your pleasant assurance that an early poem of mine first attracted you thither." In the prologue he makes this reference to his early visit to Asolo—

"How many a year, my Asolo,
Since—one step just from sea to land—
I found you, loved yet feared you so—
For natural objects seemed to stand
Palpably fire-clothed ! No—

No mastery of mine o'er these !
Terror with beauty, like the Bush
Burning but unconsumed. Bend knees,
Drop eyes to earthward ! Language ? Tush !
Silence 'tis awe decrees.

And now ? The lambent flame is—where ?
Lost from the naked world : earth, sky,
Hill, vale, tree, flower,—Italia's rare
O'er-running beauty crowds the eye—
But flame ? The Bush is bare."

On another house we read, "Restored on account of the terrible earthquake which occurred in 1695, on Friday, February 25, at 12 o'clock." The *Town Hall* is a kind of museum containing things new and old. There are under its *Loggia*, and in its staircase, great medallions of Victor Emmanuel and Garibaldi, and tablets to the brave sons of Asolo, who fell fighting for national independence in 1848, 1859, and 1860. A memorial of Robert Browning is preserved in the shape of a casket, containing a lock of his hair. Canova, who was born at Possagno in this neighbourhood, is here represented by his first work—a little shrine with a figure—executed when he was a herd-boy of seven or eight years of age; by his masterpiece "Paris;" by his last letter; by a cast taken after death;

and by a cenotaph to his memory. Portraits and pictures carry the mind back a few centuries to Queen Caterina Cornaro's days, and lastly, quite a host of antiquities bore us at a bound to Grecian and Roman times, and to the ages of bronze and stone. Leaving the Town Hall we climbed a steep ascent and stood within the circuit of the ruins of *Queen Caterina's Palace*. Caterina was born in Venice in 1454; was adopted by the Senate as its daughter, and richly endowed; was betrothed at the age of fourteen to King Lusignano of Cyprus, and was married four years afterwards. She was soon a widow, and in 1488, when Venice wished to annex Cyprus, she was forced to resign, and as a compensation Asolo and its surroundings were given to her. Permitted to retain the title of Queen, and to sign herself "Queen of Cyprus, Jerusalem, and Armenia, and Lady of Asolo," she lived here during twenty years, holding her mimic court in the palace and acting a queenly part towards her subjects, who were proud to feel themselves raised under her gentle sway into a kind of kingdom. As the ruins show, her palace had been a large, square building, with a tower at each corner. All now that remains of it are the foundations, some bits of low walls, and what was once the clock tower. As Robert Browning was charmed with the site and begged the authorities to let him repair this tower as a residence, the right to do so was sold to him, under certain conditions. His son is now carrying out his father's plans. We do not wonder that the poet admired the view from this spot. It is simply fascinating. Vine-clothed sand-hills, amongst which one seems to see the water rushing and roaring as it doubtless did long ages ago, lead the eye northward and upward to the region of the coral-built Dolomites; whilst southward the plains stretch away like a veritable sea, the white houses appearing like ships on its green waters. In clear weather several of the towns in Venetia can be seen, and even the *campaniles* of the churches of Venice itself. Mr. Browning makes *Ottima* say, in "Pippa Passes"—





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QUEEN CATERINA CORNARO'S PALACE, ASOLO.

(By kind permission of H. Young, Esq., of Asolo.)

"Ah, the clear morning! I can see St. Mark's;
That black streak is the belfry. Stop: Vicenza
Should lie . . . there's Padua, plain enough, that blue!"

Returning to Cornuda, and resuming our railway journey, we soon left the plains, and began to mount upward step by step. Green conical-shaped hills rose around us, and to the north we could see the great forms of the Alps looming up against the sky. A little further on we gained the Piave river, up the right bank of which we ran all the way to Belluno.

The **Piave** is one of the longest and most rapid rivers in Italy. It is the *Silis Plavis* of Pliny, and the name Piave is said to be a corruption of *Plavis*. The first view we obtained of it was a striking one. Its bed is at least half-a-mile broad, and it consists for the most part of a dry channel of white, bleached, rounded stones. The channel first catches the eye, then the water of a milky colour is seen flowing in several separate currents, the biggest one coming close up to the bank along which we were travelling. Here the railway is buttressed up by massive stone walls, and along their foundations huge blocks of rock have been heaped so as to act as a protecting breakwater. Such bulwarks are needed, for after heavy rains, or the melting of snow on the mountains, the whole channel is filled up with a roaring, rushing flood, that sometimes bursts its banks, and devastates the surrounding country, sweeping whole villages away. Curious erections are seen here and there in the water. These consist of triangles made of beams of wood, with platforms near their bases, on which are piled up pyramids of rocks and stones. They are called *cavalletti*, and are used to check the current, or to change its direction when it is wanted for purposes of irrigation, or to form a mill-race. They are in use everywhere throughout this country of rapid mountain torrents.

As we run up the Piave valley, which now turns eastward, the river gradually narrows, and at one point an iron bridge is thrown across it, which leads to the old, interesting

Roman town of **Valdobbiadene**. A little higher up, at **Quero-Vas**, there is a ferry, which is worked by the help of a wire rope stretched from bank to bank. Without such an arrangement it would be impossible, or at least unsafe, to attempt to cross in a boat the swift current. Beyond this is **Castelnuovo** (the new castle), and opposite, across the river, are the ruins of a tower. Castle used to be joined to tower by a massive iron chain, which could be lowered to stop the traffic of the river. It was the toll-bar of the Piave. The rocks on the left bank now rise in height and abruptness until they become sheer cliffs, 800 feet high, whose curved sides show traces of glacier action. The line, leaving now for a short distance the Piave Valley, bends round an isolated hill called **Miesna**, on the top of which is the large twelfth-century monastery of **S. Vittore**, and we steamed into **Feltre**, the most important place passed before reaching Belluno, and which well repays a short visit.

Feltre

(53½ miles, altitude 853 ft. Hotels or rather Inns—*Belvedere, Vapore, Luna, and Moro*. Rooms 1 to 2 frs. Road goes off to Primiero in Austria, 21 miles ; to S. Martino di Castrozza 26 miles ; thence to Neumarkt and Botzen on the Brenner railway.)

The very name **Feltre**, whose derivation is hidden in mystery, seems interesting, and the town itself looks to be so, as it is seen from the station, climbing up the sides, and crowning the top of an isolated hill, the *Colle delle Capre*, or the Hill of the Goats. Feltre, like other towns in this valley, is very ancient. It existed in the times of the Romans, and its inhabitants as early as 88 B.C. were inscribed as Roman citizens. Its history down these eighteen centuries has been a chequered one. Occupying an advantageous strategic position in the valley, it became successively in the fifth and sixth centuries the prey of Goths and Huns, of Longobards and Franks. Four



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PIAZZA VITTORIO EMANUELE, FELTRE.
(By kind permission of Signor Simoni, of Belluno.)



hundred years later it was ruled by bishop-princes, and Guelphs and Ghibellines fought for its possession, and five hundred years later still Bohemians and Venetians, Hungarians and Germans, occupied it in turn. In these later days it was alternately dominated by French and Austrians, and only found rest and peace when, in August, 1866, the Italian troops marched into it; and when, in October of that same year, by an enthusiastic and unanimous vote, it became part of a united Italy under King Victor Emmanuel. It had originally double walls, with towers and gates, remains of which are still standing. The outer line of walls divides the new town, which straggles along the foot of the hill, from the older part, which occupies the higher ground.

Impatient to see old Feltre we quickly passed underneath the *Porta Castaldi*, the ancient wooden gates of which now hang idly upon their rusty hinges, and began to climb *Mezza-Terra*, the main street, which, passing over the hill on which the city stands from west to east, divides it, as the name indicates, into two equal parts. We were charmed with the fine old massive stone houses on either side of us, with their frescoed fronts, handsome balconies, good round-headed windows with columns, and their great overhanging eaves. The doors, too, were worthy of notice, as several of them were of carved oak, one with a lion rampant in its panel, and others with quaint iron knockers; while above most of them the shields and coats of arms spoke of the noble families who once owned these palaces. The street brought us to the top of the Hill of Goats, and there, crowning it, we found an old *piazza* bearing the name *Vittorio Emanuele*. This was originally called *Piazza Maggiore*, and was the centre of Feltre life, as it is now the centre of interest for the traveller. Compared in point of size to other *piazze*, we should hardly call it "greater," but in the more important matters of historic and architectural interests, and that which touches chords of sentiment and feeling, it certainly surpasses many.

On glancing at the buildings round the *piazza* our

attention was attracted by the large number of marble tablets on their façades, with erased inscriptions. The chisel had been so ruthlessly employed in this barbaric work, that not a date nor a word was legible. We learned that they were records of Feltre's prowess and endurance in winning and guarding her liberties, which, when she fell under French and Austrian domination, had to be obliterated to please her conquerors. As the *piazza* is raised above the level of the roadway it is reached by a wide flight of steps. On mounting this we stood between the tall red mast from which once floated the standard of Feltre, and a stone column which formerly bore the lion of St. Mark. Beyond these there are two life-sized marble statues on stone pedestals, and as they have been erected since Feltre joined Italy, they have legible inscriptions. They are as follows: "To Panfilo Castaldi, the generous discoverer of movable characters for printing, Italy has given this late tribute of honour. Born in Feltre, 1398. The monument was raised by the printers of Italy, headed by those of Milan, 1868." The other monument is to "Vittorino de' Rambuldoni, educationalist and scientist, who was born in Feltre, 1378, and died in Mantua, 1446," and on it we read: "After 422 years the country in memory of its worthy ancestors, renews and retemps itself."

On the south side of the *piazza* is the old *Sala del Consiglio* and *Palace of the People*, now a school and theatre. Above the entrance door is a large gilded lion of St. Mark, and on its façade have been painted the names of some of Feltre's illustrious sons, beginning in the twelfth century. In this theatre, in 1725, the comedies of Carlo Goldoni were first acted. The poet was then but a youth of seventeen, having been born in Venice in 1707. Below the theatre is the *Municipality*, built on the inner line of walls, and enclosing one of the old towers. The houses that complete the south side of the *piazza* have a lovely *loggia* with marble columns and good capitals on the first story, and on the lintels of most of the doors are the words *Christus nobiscum state*. On the west side of the *piazza* there is a

large, newly-built Gothic palace, and beside it a small Lombardic one with good columns in its windows, already going to ruins. The buildings on the east side call for no remark, but those on the north, which crown the "Hill of the Goats," are the most interesting of all. These consist of an old castle, and of a church built in a strange position, namely, on the top of an immense reservoir. The reservoir is of ancient construction, and from its size and lofty site can supply all the town with water, and was thus invaluable in a time of siege. The church above is reached by a series of steps, and part of the top of the reservoir serves as a terrace or platform. The altar-piece to St. Roch and St. Sebastian shows that it was a votive church built in a time of pestilence.

The old *Castle*, said to have been built by Alboin, King of the Longobards, consists chiefly of a lofty stone tower. From its summit, which is gained by means of a wooden staircase, one looks down upon the red-tiled roofs of all Feltre, and away across a flat green country, scored by broad white watercourses, to the great Dolomite mountains in the district of Primiero and S. Martino di Castrozza. The custodian of the old pile had on his cap the words "*G. Fuoco*" (guardian of fires), and to my inquiry said that his duty was to mount to the top of the tower every hour of the day and of the night, summer and winter, to see that no fire had broken out in the town, and to strike the hour on the bell. It is a curious old custom of feudal times.

Leaving the castle and the *piazza*, we continued our walk down the *Mezza-Terra* eastward till we came to the old walls of the town and a gateway. This was *Porta Oria*, which consisted of three strong Gothic arches, the outer and innermost being furnished with doors and the central one with a portcullis. Returning to the *piazza*, we descended a covered stone staircase by the Municipality, and came out underneath the outer walls. Looking back, we saw on the wall St. Bernardino's monogram of Christ, which recalls the fact that the saint was born here in 1439.

We were now in what I have termed the new town of Feltre, which, beyond the *Duomo*, Baptistry, and church of *Ogni Santi*, contains little of interest. The *Duomo* is a large gloomy building, with a good Gothic apse. Set into the wall of the vestibule is a Roman stone with an inscription—a relic of Feltre's Roman occupation. The Baptistry has a large marble font, and the ceiling of its apse is covered with marble mosaics. The church of *Ogni Santi*, which is attached to the public hospital, has affixed to its façade a fine sarcophagus of the family Rainone, which was one of the four governing families chosen by King Otho towards the close of the tenth century.

Feltre is a starting point for the exploration of the Dolomites. From it one can drive to Primiero in Austria, twenty-one miles to the north, and onwards some five miles more to S. Martino di Castrozza, and thence west to Neumarkt and Botzen, on the Brenner, whence the lovely Rosengarten Dolomites can easily be reached.

Returning now to Feltre Station we resumed our journey to Belluno.

After leaving Feltre the line again bends round Mount Miesna so as to regain the Piave Valley. Ground never seems to recover itself after a landslip. Such catastrophes bring about a double permanent ruin. The denuded land is ever afterwards good for nothing, and no vegetation seems to flourish on the fallen débris. This is illustrated by the condition of this hillside, and of the valley at its foot, both of which show the disastrous effects of a landslip that occurred in some far back epoch. The next station is **Cesio-Busche**—**Busche** being the name of a little village close by the line, and **Cesio** that of one some five miles away, nearer the foot of the mountains. The latter is famous as being the place where, in 1786, a Roman milestone was found with the inscription *Tiberius Claudius Drusi Filius*, which led to the discovery of traces of a Roman road. These traces unfortunately have been effaced, but the stone is preserved in the house of Signor Centenese, near Busche. A splendid view is now obtained of the

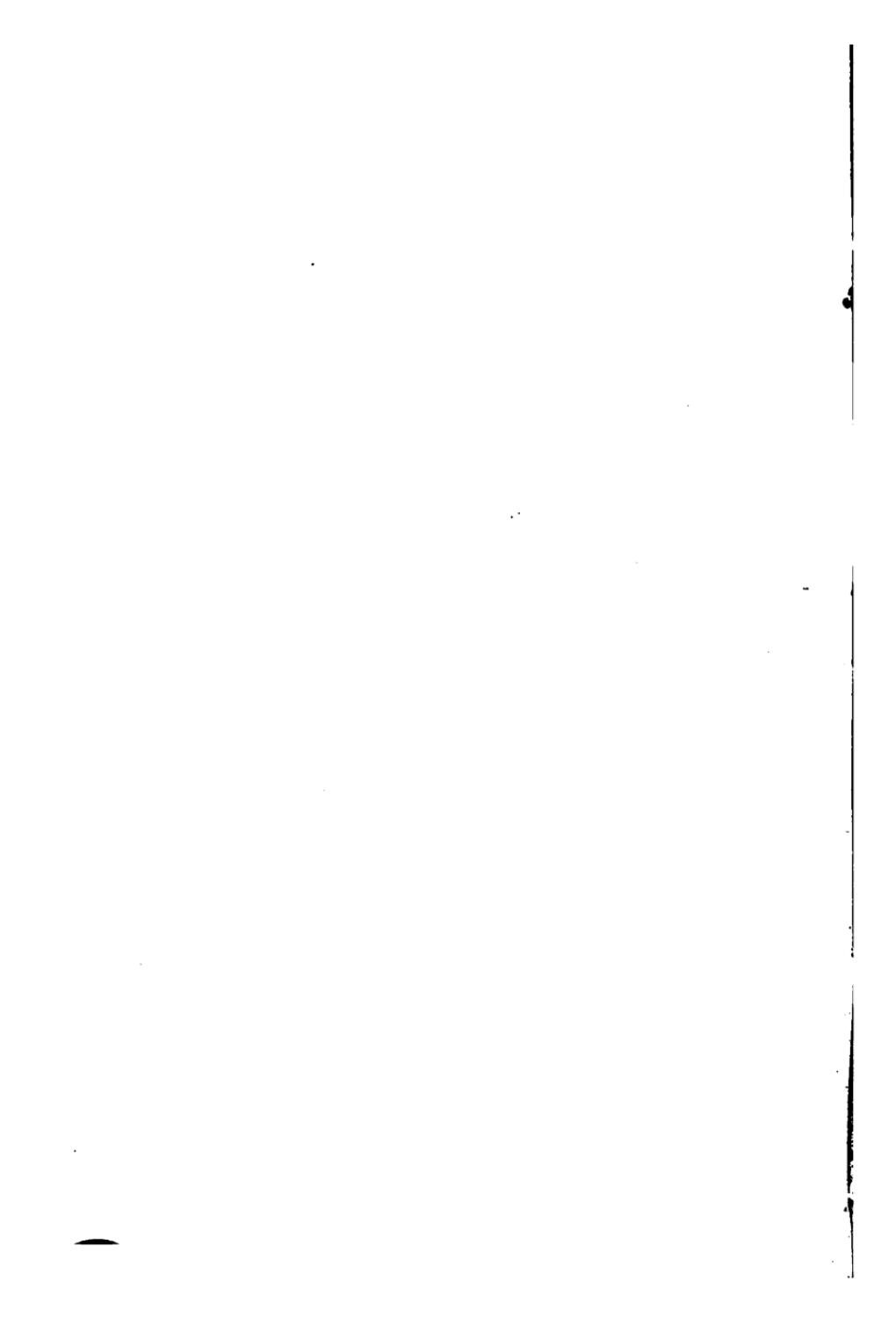


To face p. 26.

CASTALDI GATEWAY, FELTRE.

(By kind permission of Signor Simoni, of Belluno.)





Piave river, whose channel, comparatively narrow at Busche, where it is spanned by an iron bridge, broadens until it is nearly a mile wide, and the valley has the appearance of having been once an immense lake.

► Across the river the village of **Lentiai** is seen. In its church, distinguishable by its tall *campanile*, are pictures and frescoes by Titian, his son Orazio, and his two cousins, Cesare and Marco Vecellio, a proof that we were now getting into the Titian country. **San Giustina**, the next village, on the Vesès, a tributary of the Piave, seemed to be enterprising and progressive, for it was lighted by electricity. The marvel, however, is, not that it has adopted this mode of lighting, but that all villages possessing equally with it good water power do not follow its example, as it costs little in comparison with gas or oil. A house in which Goldoni lived is seen standing on an elevation to the north-west of the village. A substantial stone bridge carries line and road across the *Cordevole*, another tributary of the Piave. The bed of the Cordevole is here a quarter of a mile broad, and the bridge has need to be a strong one, for the river often comes down in roaring flood, threatening to sweep all before it. The first bridge, built in 1878, at a cost of ten thousand pounds, was swept away in 1882.

Running the eye up the bed of the Cordevole, a mountain is seen that wears a very threatening aspect, and looks as if it had been cut in two. It is *Peron*, one half of which fell, tradition says, as the result of an earthquake, in 1114, burying the town of Cordove and turning several square miles of smiling country into a wild desert, "heaps on heaps," which remains in all its repulsive ruggedness and barrenness unchanged to this day. In the opposite direction, on the left bank of the Piave, we saw the village of **Mel**. Here lived the father of Cadorè painters, Antonio Rossi. He was born at Tai, a little village near Pieve di Cadore, Titian's birthplace, and came to Mel in 1496, where he lived and worked till 1525, the year of his death. We are told by the writer Ticozzi that "his colouring was so beautiful that Titian never returned to his native country

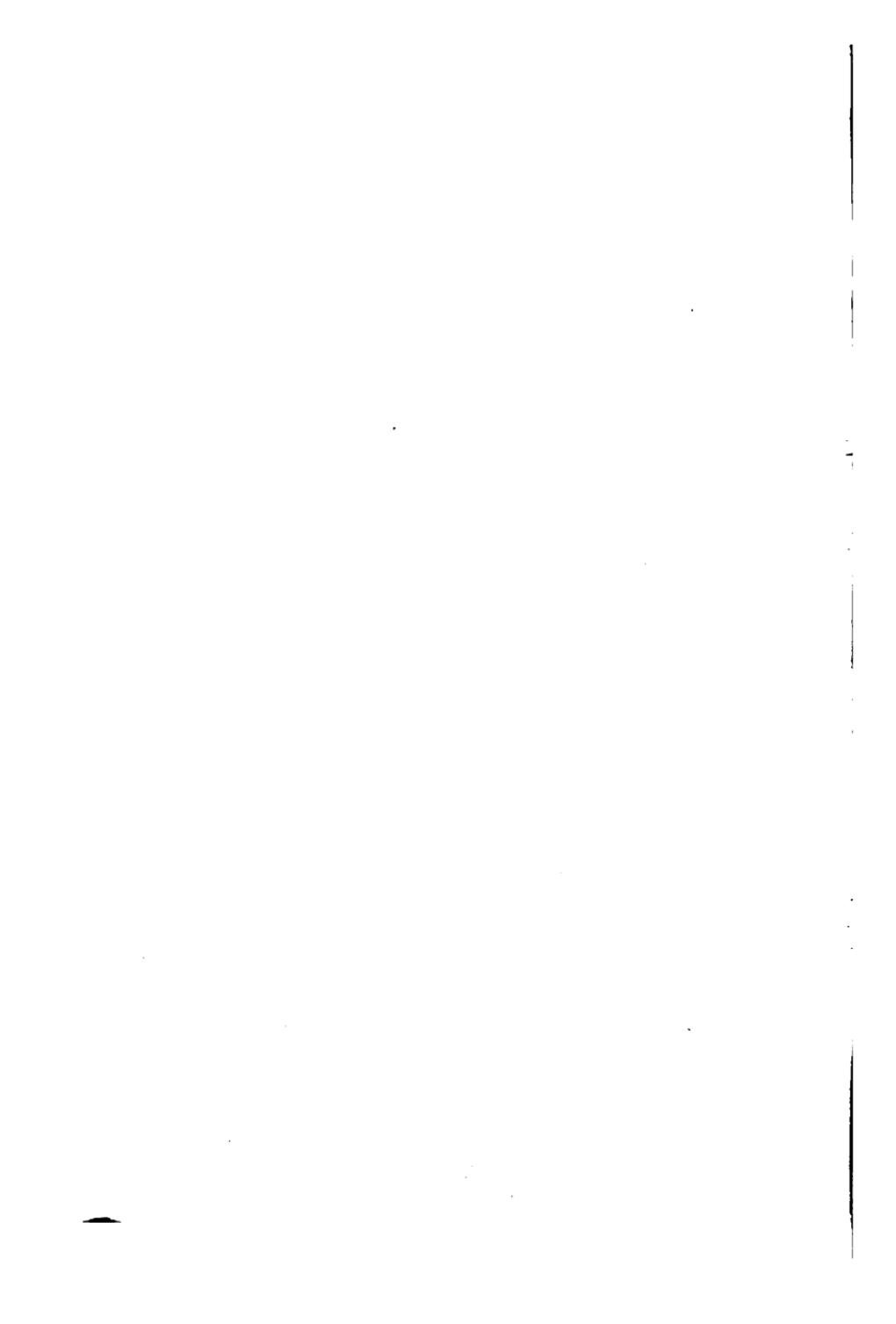
without going to see his pictures, which probably first imparted to Titian an idea of art, and inspired him to become a painter." Antonio Rossi left three sons, all of whom became painters of note, especially one called Giovanni, who is known as Giovanni of Mel, because of the many works he painted in this place. The Church of Mel contains various pictures by Cesare Vecellio, and one attributed to Titian. We next passed **Sedico-Bribano** and one or two other prosperous-looking villages, and then the train steamed into the railway terminus of **Belluno**. The omnibus of the excellent *Albergo alle Alpi* carried us in a few minutes into comfortable quarters, where we remained several days, in order to explore the town and neighbourhood before resuming our mountain journey.

To face p. 28.

BELLUNO.

(By kind permission of Signor A. Simoni, of Belluno.)





CHAPTER III

BELLUNO

With Walks and Excursions to Mussoi—Bolzano — Castion — Vena d'Oro — Agordo — Alleghe Lake—Caprile

(Railway terminus. Provincial capital with about 6000 inhabitants. Height above sea-level, 1328 feet.

Hotels—*Alle Alpi* (first-class English house); *Cappello* (Alpine Club). Nearest railway station, "through the Dolomites": Toblach, 64½ miles. Diligences carrying mails, passengers, and luggage leave Belluno for Toblach morning and evening. By private carriage with two horses the whole journey can be made in one day if necessary. Luggage gives no trouble in the mountains; it can either go with the traveller in carriage or diligence, or be sent separately at fixed rates by the latter. For all particulars as to times and fares see Appendix.)

THE name **Belluno** suggests Baal, the sun-god, or Bellus and Bellona, the god and goddess of war, thus pointing to the town having a far back pagan origin. Whether this be so or not cannot be known, but its existence in Roman times is perfectly certain. It is the old *Bellunum*, mentioned by Pliny and Ptolemy, which was inscribed in the tribe *Papiria*, and Roman remains have been, and are still, dug up within its bounds. A sketch of its history during the past eighteen centuries might easily be compiled from chronicles and histories, but I prefer to draw it from the pages of the town itself by walking about its streets, and examining its houses and their contents, as far as that is desirable or possible.

The position of Belluno is sufficiently commanding. It is situated 1328 feet above the sea-level, on a broad promontory between two rivers—the Ardo and the Piave—the former washing its eastern side and the latter its southern, and it is the centre of a splendid panorama of wooded hills and lofty Dolomite peaks. The houses, which number about a thousand, with about six thousand inhabitants, are built partly on the steep sides of the promontory and partly on its level summit. The former part is the old town of Belluno, and the latter is the new. Between the two is a large open space called the *Campitello*, or “the Big Field,” where can be seen a good deal of the life of the place, and which forms a convenient exploring centre.

The *Campitello* was once a field of Mars—now it is given up to the arts of peace. Here the chief shops are to be found; here are the cafés and the theatre, those indispensable requisites of every Italian provincial town; here “society” is to be seen promenading backwards and forwards in the evenings; and here on market days the business of the country for miles around is transacted.

The north side of the *Campitello* is bounded by a long arc of houses, built over a handsome row of porticoes, some of the shafts and capitals of which are very fine. Under these porticoes are the shops I have referred to, and those of them that meet the Italian peasant’s fondness for colour and jewellery are attractive, and brighten up the artistic, though one-sided street. Piles of the gay-coloured shawls and handkerchiefs that the women know so well how to arrange on their heads and shoulders, are heaped up at doors and in windows, and, overflowing the pavement, fill up the arches of the arcades.

The windows of the *orefici*, or silversmiths, glitter with rows of the long gold and silver pins, of the large filigree earrings, and of the showy chains with which the peasants love to decorate themselves. Here is a woman coming along with over a dozen of these silver pins arranged artistically in her hair at the back of her head, and here is another with a little fortune of gold chain about her neck. The peasants

really invest their money in these articles, rather than place it in the Savings banks which the Government has opened everywhere for their benefit. But if it is an investment that yields no interest, it is one that entails but little loss, for the articles are bought by weight, at only a little above the cost of the gold and silver they contain, and when resold they readily bring their price in the market. I was surprised to learn that the goods of this class were "made on the premises." Inside the shop, which consists generally of one room, the master has his small furnace, crucible, and other requisites ; and when he is not selling his goods he is occupied in making them.

The line of shops is broken about the middle by a *church* and an *orphanage*. As they are entered from under the arcade they would not be very noticeable were it not that the wall is frescoed on either side of the church door. On the one hand there is a fresco of St. Roch and St. Sebastian with the date 1563, and on the other one of St. Cosmo and St. Damian. Whenever St. Roch and St. Sebastian appear on a church we know that it is a votive offering because of some plague, and Belluno was decimated by a plague a few years before the erection of this building. In 1806 Napoleon secularised it, and in 1817 it was used by the Austrians as a powder magazine, but it was reconsecrated in 1860. The only picture of any merit it contains is an Assumption above the high altar, attributed to Palma Giovane.

The *Orphanage* beside the church also marks a plague visitation. Its founder and director, Don Antonio Sberti, told us that he was led to establish it, when, about forty years ago, cholera raged in Belluno and the streets were filled with friendless, uncared-for children. Over the door is a good motto : "*Non relinquam vos orphanos*" (St. John xiv. 18). On the façade of the church, seen from the *Campitello*, is a figure of St. Roch and the word *Charitas*.

At the extreme end of this new part of Belluno there are objects of interest, and these we looked at before starting to explore the resources of the old town. At the east end is the Gothic church of *San Stefano*, erected between 1460

and 1470. It stands parallel with the road on a rising ground, and has beside its southern door a very conspicuous monument. This is a large Roman sarcophagus, which was discovered when the foundations of the church were being dug. What can be known of its history is written in the sculptures that adorn its four sides. On the front there are the figures of a Roman soldier and a matron with this inscription : C. FL. HOSTILIUS PAP. SERTORIANUS LAVR. LAV. P. EQ. R. M. SIBI ET DOMITIAE I. FILIAE SEVERAE CONJUGI INCOMPARALI V. F." On the two ends there are representations of the chase. One shows Ostilius pursuing a wild boar, and the other shows him holding a deer by the horns. On the back of the sarcophagus the Roman is seen returning triumphantly from the chase on horseback, his two servants carrying his game behind him in a net slung from their shoulders.

Entering the church we found it a fine proportioned building. Marble columns with well-carved capitals divide the nave from the aisles. The altar-piece is a baptism, by Cesare Vecellio. In Christ's hand is a scroll with the words "*Hic est filius meus dilectus.*" On the left side of the choir there is a picture of the meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek by the same painter, and one on the right of the Fall of Manna, also attributed to him, but more probably by Frigimelico, a native of Belluno, who lived somewhat earlier than the Vecellios. There are several other pictures by him in this church. In a side chapel there are some interesting frescoes of the birth, death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord, and of the conversion of St. Paul. Unfortunately, however, they had at one time been plastered over, and in uncovering them they have been sorely damaged. The chisel has cut away the colouring everywhere, leaving white marks. Brustolon, the famous wood carver, who was born in Belluno in 1662, is represented here by several works of art, in the form of angels, statues, candelabra, &c. This church of *San Stefano* has just been overhauled and repaired.

At the west end of the town, reached from the *Campitello*

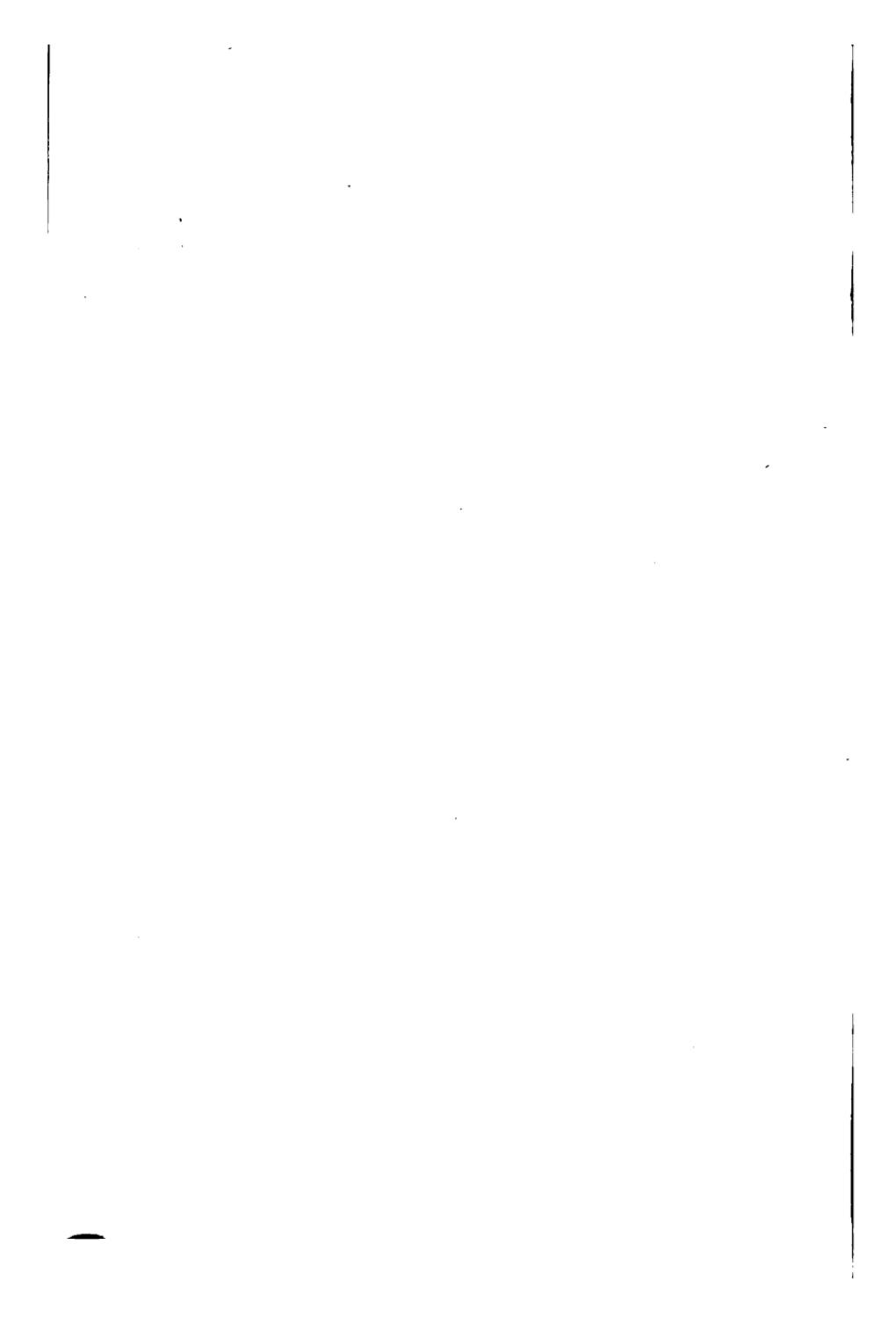


To face p. 32.

THE PREFETTURA, BELLUNO.

(By kind permission of Signor Unterberger, of Trento.)

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by the Corso Garibaldi, a long street, the houses on the south side of which have a magnificent position overlooking the great Piave Valley, is a triumphal arch. It was built in honour of Napoleon, but his reverses and ultimate fall in 1815 put an end to any hope of his passing under it, which, by the irony of fate, became the fortune of his enemy Francis I. of Austria the following year. Through the arch a pretty little Gothic votive wayside chapel is seen where two roads meet.

The old town of Belluno had originally walls and gate-towers. These were first raised in 963 by Bishop Giovanni, a warrior-saint, who used to celebrate mass with his sword and pastoral staff on the altar. Three gates were on the northern side of the town, called *Porta Dojona*, *Porta Reniera*, and *Porta Castello*. *Porta Dojona* is still standing. It is in the *Piazza V. Emanuele*, beyond the theatre at the eastern end of the *Campitello*. *Dojona* is a modified form of Doglioni, a bishop who gave his name to it. The gateway is a massive stone erection, with huge, heavy wooden doors that are yet on their hinges. Above its large arch is a Lion of St. Mark, with the words, "Questo leone di S. Marco—posto nel sec XV sulla porta interiore—faqui riposto nel 1874—in luogo dell' abbattuto dai Francesi nel 1797." *Porta Castello* has disappeared, but its name is preserved in the *Contrada di Castello*, by which the town is entered at the western end of the *Campitello*. *Porta Reniera*, or *Dante*, as it is now commonly called because of a bust of the poet that surmounts it, is between these other two, opposite the church of S. Rocco. These three entrances are still the only ones by which old Belluno can be got at from its northern side. We entered by the central one, *Porta Dante*. Passing under its arch and across an open space we soon reached the *Piazza del Duomo*. Around this are grouped the chief historic buildings of Belluno. It is the meeting-place of centuries. Two buildings that stand beside each other recall the history of Belluno for a thousand years. The one is the Palace of the Bishop-

Princes, and the other is that of the Venetian Rectors. For 600 years, that is from about 800 to 1400, Belluno was ruled by the former, of whom Giovanni, above mentioned, was a good specimen—men who, uniting in themselves the offices of priest and king, produced a combination that in the history of the world has led to little but grinding tyranny and oppression. Their old seat of authority, marked by a tower, is now turned into the Court of Assize.

About 1400 Venice obtained possession of Belluno, and her Governors, called *Podestà*, or as here *Rettori* (rectors), ruled it wisely and well till the fall of the Republic, under Napoleon, in 1796. Their old palace, called still the *Palazzo dei Rettori*, now the *Prefettura*, is a good building in the Lombardic style, erected almost immediately after Venice got possession of Belluno. It has handsome balconies, and a beautiful portico sustained on marble columns, with foliated capitals, running round three sides of it. On its façade there are busts in bronze and marble of some of the chief rectors, such as Alvise Mocenigo, Francesco Zeno, Francesco Soranzo, Agostino da Mula, Marco Giustiniani, and Giulio Contarini, all members of well-known Venetian families. On the wall under the portico there are the remains of a small Lion of St. Mark. To the west of the Rector's Palace is the *Municipality*, a fine Gothic building. We were surprised to learn that it was built only half-a-century ago, till the explanation was forthcoming that the beautifully-carved stones of its doors and windows were cut in the fifteenth century, and formed part of the Palace of the Council of the Nobles—the House of Lords of that day. On either side of the entrance is a large marble slab let into the wall, on which are recorded the most interesting facts of modern Belluno history. From the time Napoleon took possession of the town of Belluno in 1796 till 1813, its history was a chequered one, as it passed now from France to Austria, and again from Austria to France, the Bellunese in the struggles always preferring the rule of Napoleon to that of Francis. But in 1813, when Napoleon's star was setting, the Austrians

entered to remain. Thirty-five years passed before an attempt could be made to throw off their hated yoke. But the time came at last. In the great revolt of 1848-49, which loosened the grip of Austria over Northern Italy, Belluno took an honourable part, and she did the same again in 1861-66 when the whole region escaped from Austria's grasp. On the one tablet are the names of the heroes who fell in these struggles for independence, and on the other is recorded the vote of unanimity, cast on October 21, 1866, by which Belluno joined herself to the kingdom of Italy under Victor Emmanuel. In the entrance hall of the palace is a stone, dated 1661, which records a decree of the Council of Ten, conferring privileges upon Belluno. In the various rooms are portraits and busts of some of her more illustrious sons—Andrea Alpaga, scientist; Tomaso Cattulo, geologist; Gerolamo Seguto, traveller; Sebastian Barozzi, poet; and Paoletti, painter. An interesting fresco by Da Min shows old Belluno with its walls and gates. I was surprised not to see a record of Andrea Brustolon, the famous wood sculptor.

A few steps south of the Municipality stands the *Duomo*, its west end built over an old bastion that commanded the Piave Valley. Originally it was a twelfth-century Gothic structure, but it was destroyed, and the present one is a huge, ungraceful, and unfinished sixteenth-century building. It contains many pictures, but only a few of any merit. Cesare Vecellio is represented by a St. Sebastian, Palma Giovane by a Deposition, Bassano by a St. Lawrence, and Schiavoni by a St. Bernard. In the sacristy there is a bishop's coat of arms, and in the adjoining baptistry a statue of Christ carved by Brustolon. Some of the altars have columns of verd-antique, of African and of other precious marbles. The view from the *duomo*, or still better from the top of the *campanile*, which is 200 feet high, is one of great extent and beauty, commanding, as it does, a large part of the great broad valley of the Piave, with the whole diversified circle of field and wood, of hill and mountain in the midst of which stands Belluno.

Near the *duomo* is the *Museum*. Its contents throw not a little light on the history of the place. There is an abundance of proof of Roman occupation. On entering, the first thing that meets the eye are Roman *cippi* with inscriptions built into the passage walls. In the rooms there are cases containing fibiæ, knives, bracelets, rings, beads, charms, tweezers for pulling out white hairs, a little Jove with a thunderbolt in his hand, a sepulchral urn with bones and ashes, and a large quantity of coins bearing the effigies of Julius Cæsar, Tiberius, Marcus Aurelius, Trajan, Constantine, and among others a false coin of bronze, coated with silver, made under Nero, which, doubtless, he put in circulation as genuine. There also are amphoræ and lanterns in terra-cotta, seals of corporations and families in stone and metal, medals, and a quantity of old arms and armour. Andrea Ferara, the famous swordmaker, was born and worked in Belluno, but I failed to find in the Museum a specimen of his wonderful blades, and the keeper told us that, to his regret, it contained nothing of his. It is said he lived and worked in Banff in Scotland for some years, and in Scotland plenty of his swords are to be seen. The library in connection with the Museum contains many interesting books and manuscripts relating to Belluno and its people. One manuscript bearing the date 1378 treats of firearms, another, whose pages have coloured initial letters and gold decoration, is dated 1434, and contains the original constitution of Belluno, while thirty volumes contain the proceedings and enactments of the Council of State from 1378 to 1785. The Museum also contains pictures, engravings in copper and wood, and geographical maps.

Crossing to the other, or eastern, side of old Belluno, we found another group of ancient buildings worthy of inspection. On the way we passed through the *Piazza del Mercato*, occupied daily by sellers of dairy and garden produce, and which is the scene, every Saturday, of extra animation, when it receives the overflow from the great *Campitello*. Old-fashioned houses, with Gothic windows and balconies, and with loggias and arcades, surround it, and in its centre a

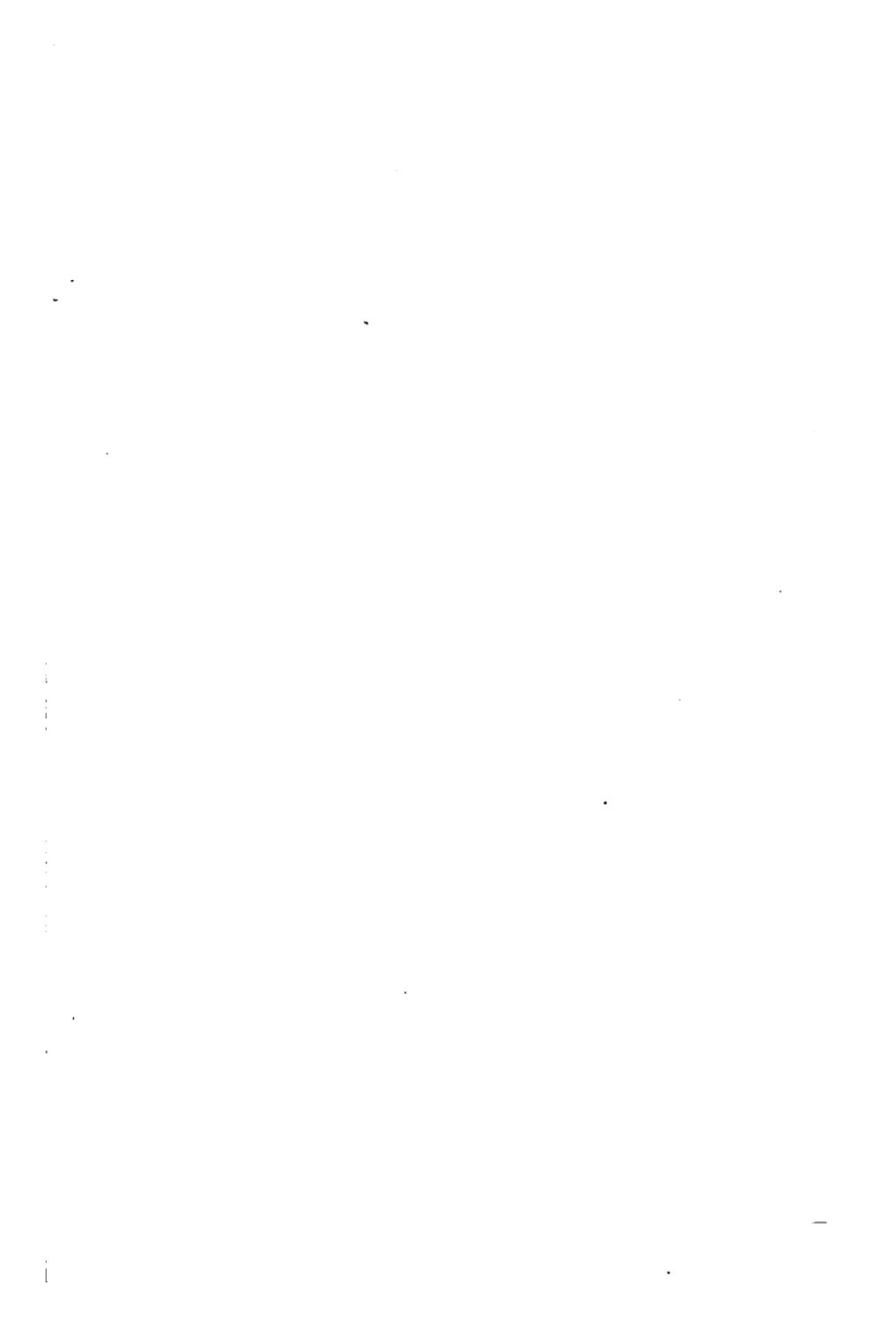
great stone fountain is ever sending forth an abundance of pure water. The first of the ancient buildings we looked at was the church of *San Pietro*. It was built in 1326, and restored in 1750. Brustolon is well represented here by two pictures carved in wood that serve as altar-pieces. The one represents the Crucifixion. At the foot of the cross on which Christ hangs are the three Marys, and above it are heavenly visitants. The other represents the death of St. Francis Xavier, the French missionary. On his voyage to China he was seized with fever, and the captain of the ship, landing him on an island, left him to die. He is here represented lying on a skin in a hut of boughs on the sandy beach, the sea breaking in gentle ripples at his feet.

Immediately below this church is the *Regio Liceo Tiziano*, founded in the sixteenth century, which has a library rich in books and manuscripts, and near to this is the secularised old Gothic church of *Santa Maria dei Battuti*. Continuing our way in a southern direction down the arcaded street of *Mezza-Terra*, where we find houses with quaint windows, and one with a chimney, like a little shrine or chapel half-way up its gable wall, we soon reached another of old Belluno's gates, *Porta Ruga*. It consists of three arches one behind the other, the outermost having a variety of coats of arms upon it. This appears to have been the only way Belluno could be entered from this lower side.

Porta Ruga is a little way above the junction of the Ardo and the Piave, and passing out by it we found ourselves in the *Borgo di Piave*, a suburb of Belluno, that lies along the right bank of the river. It is inhabited chiefly by men engaged in the conveying of rafts of wood down the Piave. Some of these rafts are made up on the spot, as there are one or two saw-mills here, but the majority come down from the higher reaches of the river, and this is a station where the raftsmen are changed. A modern iron bridge is at this spot thrown across the Piave, a little below the ruins of an old stone one, which was swept away by the floods of 1882. One arch of this latter still stands entire, and the foundations

of another were visible in the rushing water. The Piave, we were told, rises with astonishing rapidity, one or two wet days in the mountains being sufficient to make it fill up its broad white bed. The year 1873 was a disastrous one for Belluno, as for the whole of this region, owing to a terrible earthquake that then occurred. Two-thirds of the city is said to have been wholly or partially destroyed, and some forty persons were killed, and many wounded. Just across the bridge, above the left bank of the river, is a curious memento of this disaster. Two cottages are there standing, with vines growing up their walls, and a small garden with fruit-trees in it surrounding them. The original position of this piece of property was near the top of the hill above them. As a result of the earthquake houses and land came slipping down some seven hundred feet to their present position. Their strange journey gave rise to a lawsuit. The hill-top belonged to one proprietor, the hill-foot to another. He whose property they left claimed them, and he on whose property they had intruded themselves did the same. How the legal question was settled I never heard. The cottages are partially in ruins, the walls being rent, and the roofs having been taken off.

Belluno does a small trade in furniture and carriages. The carriage builders are chiefly to be found in the *Corso Garibaldi*, between the *Campitello* and the Triumphal Arch. But its mainstay is agriculture. And its life and business is best seen on a Saturday, which is the weekly market day, when the huge *Campitello* is turned into a great fair—a fair full of gaiety and picturesqueness and bustle, every one apparently in the best of humour, and over head and ears in business. In one place cattle, sheep, horses, donkeys, and pigs are gathered together for sale; in another, grain, roots, plants, and seeds of all kinds. In this corner are butter, cheese, eggs, and fowls; and in that, melons, peaches, apples, pears, nuts, garlic, and vegetables of all sorts. Booths are erected in long rows for the disposal of scythes, sickles, knives, scissors, grinding-stones, barrels that the peasants





To face p. 39.

AGORDO AND THE PALA DI S. LUCANO.

(By kind permission of Signor Unterberger, of Trento.)

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use to carry wine or water in when they go to work, and all other requisites of field and garden labour; elsewhere are stalls for the sale of boots and shoes, bright stuffs and handkerchiefs. Here men dressed as harlequins stand up in carts, trying to sell by auction blankets and coverlets, rugs and carpets. There a merry fellow, standing in a little field of water-melons, is engaged busily disposing of them in red juicy slices at "*cinque schei la gondola*," a poetic way of saying "a halfpenny a slice."

The way in which the farmers do business is very extraordinary. We continually saw men struggling to thrust pieces of money into the hands of others, who resisted by clenching their fists, thrusting their hands into their pockets, or holding their arms above their heads. If at last any one yielded and took the money, then his antagonist caught him by the hand, wrist, arm, or coat-collar and dragged him off to the nearest café or wine-shop, the prisoner usually hanging back and often struggling to get free, like a naughty schoolboy taken to punishment. On inquiring what all this meant we were told that business is usually done through *mediatori*, or middlemen. These were the assailants in the contests we had witnessed. One has an order to buy certain animals, we will say. He goes off in search of the owner and tries to drive a bargain. The money he holds in his hand is *caparra* or arles. If he can get that accepted his bargain is as good as sealed, when he drags his victim off to the café or wine-shop, where the buyer has been sitting comfortably viewing the battle from afar. A young man, evidently imagining that his countrymen might be thought quarrelsome, or perhaps riotous, volunteered the information that they were not so, but were on the contrary honest and kind, sober and industrious, that in fact they were *molta buona gente* (very good people).

I do not wish to close this brief description of Belluno without saying something as to its surroundings. The country is beautiful, and the mountain scenery magnificent. Walks and drives can be had in all directions that offer a variety of attractions.

Walks and Excursions

Going northwards, towards the foot of the mountains, leafy lanes wind in and out through fields and villages, or up the banks of the river Ardo, offering inviting rambles. If the highway is kept the first place reached, about a mile and a half above Belluno, is **Mussoi**. It consists of but a few houses, the chief of which is *Villa Cappellari*, where Bartolomeo Alberto Cappellari, afterwards Pope Gregory XVI., was born in 1765. Attached to the villa is a little old Gothic chapel with a groined roof. The walls of the apse and the roof of the chapel have frescoes, but they are modern, and poor in colour and design, and false to fact. Those in the apse represent prophets and the aged Simeon. In one compartment of the roof are the four Fathers of the Church, and in the other the four Evangelists with Sibyls. The symbols of the Evangelists depart from the usual order. St. Matthew has St. Luke's symbol of the man, with the Samian Sibyl; St. Mark has the symbol of the lion, and the Cumæan Sibyl; St. Luke has St. Matthew's ox and the Delphian Sibyl; and St. John has the eagle, with the Libyan Sibyl. Beyond the *Villa Cappellari* is the church of *San Sebastiano*. It stands solitarily on a rising ground, at a bend of the road, with a quiet old churchyard with flat grave-stones around it. The *campanile* is a good stone square erection with a long cone-shaped top, covered with red tiles. Into the wall of the church there is built a large old stone, beautifully carved in Italo-Byzantine style.

About a couple of miles further on is the little village of **Bolzano**, with old houses having wooden outside stairs and balconies overgrown with green gourds, bright with their yellow flowers and fruits. The women with their silver hair-pins and gold chains and earrings looked picturesque. The parish church has frescoes of the same stamp as those of the Pope's chapel, and a marble stone let into the wall records the fact that it was in this church that Gregory XVI. was baptized, and that in memory of it he had

enriched it with gifts. Some of the seats had coats of arms on them, one of these with a crown, showing that even this little village once had noble families. From this point a good view is obtained of the great needle rock, called the *Gusella del Vescovà*, and we could see the sharp outline of Mount Peron.

In the opposite direction pleasant walks and drives can be had either down the Piave, in the direction of Mel, or up its left bank. Choosing this latter direction, we passed over a well-known wooded undulating country, and obtained splendid views of Belluno, crowning its promontory with the great battlemented Dolomites beyond and the broad lake-like bed of the Piave at our feet.

A little way back from the river, on a shoulder of a hill, is the village of **Castion**, its houses circling round a large open green *piazza*, which affords a very extensive view. At one end of this *piazza* stands the village church with a tall *campanile*, that we had often noticed from Belluno.

Vena d'Oro

(*Vena d'Oro* (Spring of Gold). Large Hydropathic Establishment ; pension with baths 8 fr. Distance from Belluno about 4 miles. Omnibus to and from twice daily, fare 1 fr.)

A hydropathic establishment, called the *Vena d'Oro* (Spring of Gold), most pleasantly situated on the hill-side, and reached by winding paths among plantations of pine, makes a convenient resting-place. Its enterprising proprietor, Cavaliere Lucchetti, told us how, twenty-five years ago, he bought the spring of water and ninety mètres of land from the Austrian Government for 24 lire (19s. 2d.). It was a barren spot, but he had confidence in the excellence of the water, so he built a little house and began his Water Cure. The thing took and grew. He added field to field and house to house, until now he owns 300,000 square mètres of land and has accommodation for 150 people. From here one can vary the road back to Belluno

by crossing the Piave, at *Ponte nelle Alpi*, a lofty, slim, iron structure, and returning by its right bank, which however presents fewer features of interest.

One delightful driving excursion I must mention. It is to *Agordo*, which may be prolonged to *Alleghe Lake*, and *Caprile*.

Agordo—Alleghe Lake—Caprile

	AGORDO.	ALLEGHE.	CAPRILE.
Distances from Belluno, . . .	18½ m. . .	32½ m. . .	35 m.
Heights above sea-level, . . .	2120 ft. . .	3633 ft. . .	3473 ft.
Carriage hire with 1 horse, . . .	12 fr. . .	22 fr. . .	24 fr.
" " 2 horses, . . .	20 fr. . .	38 fr. . .	40 fr.
Comfortable hotels, . . .	<i>Minieri</i> . . .	<i>Masard</i> . . .	<i>Alpian Posta</i> .
A Diligence leaves Belluno daily at 8.40 A.M., arriving at Agordo at 1 P.M. ; fare 3 fr. 20 c.			

The road to *Agordo* lies up the valley of the *Cordevole*, which begins at the foot of Mount Peron. Half-an-hour's drive past *Mussoi*, across the torrent *Gresol*, rich in petrifications, and through the hamlet *Casoni*, brought us to *Peron*, our road having had much varied beauty, as it now ran between sweet-smelling acacia hedges, in which oak, elm, pine, and rowan trees were planted at intervals, now lay between steep well-wooded banks, and now was raised on an embankment high above the surrounding country. It was half of this Mount Peron that, falling on January 7, 1114, buried the town of Cordova and turned three million square yards of smiling country into a stony wilderness, which remains in all its awe-inspiring repulsiveness to this day. The natives call the waves of stones and rocks, *mede*, because of their resemblance to the billowy swathes of hay in their fields. Across this wilderness at the foot of Mount Vedana, the Carthusian monks, expelled from the *Certosa* at Pavia, have built themselves a monastery, where they do gardening, make church furniture, and distil a liqueur called *Vedana*,—each monk dwelling in a separate little walled-in house. As we drove along a splendid road up the left bank of the Cordevole, we saw bits of the

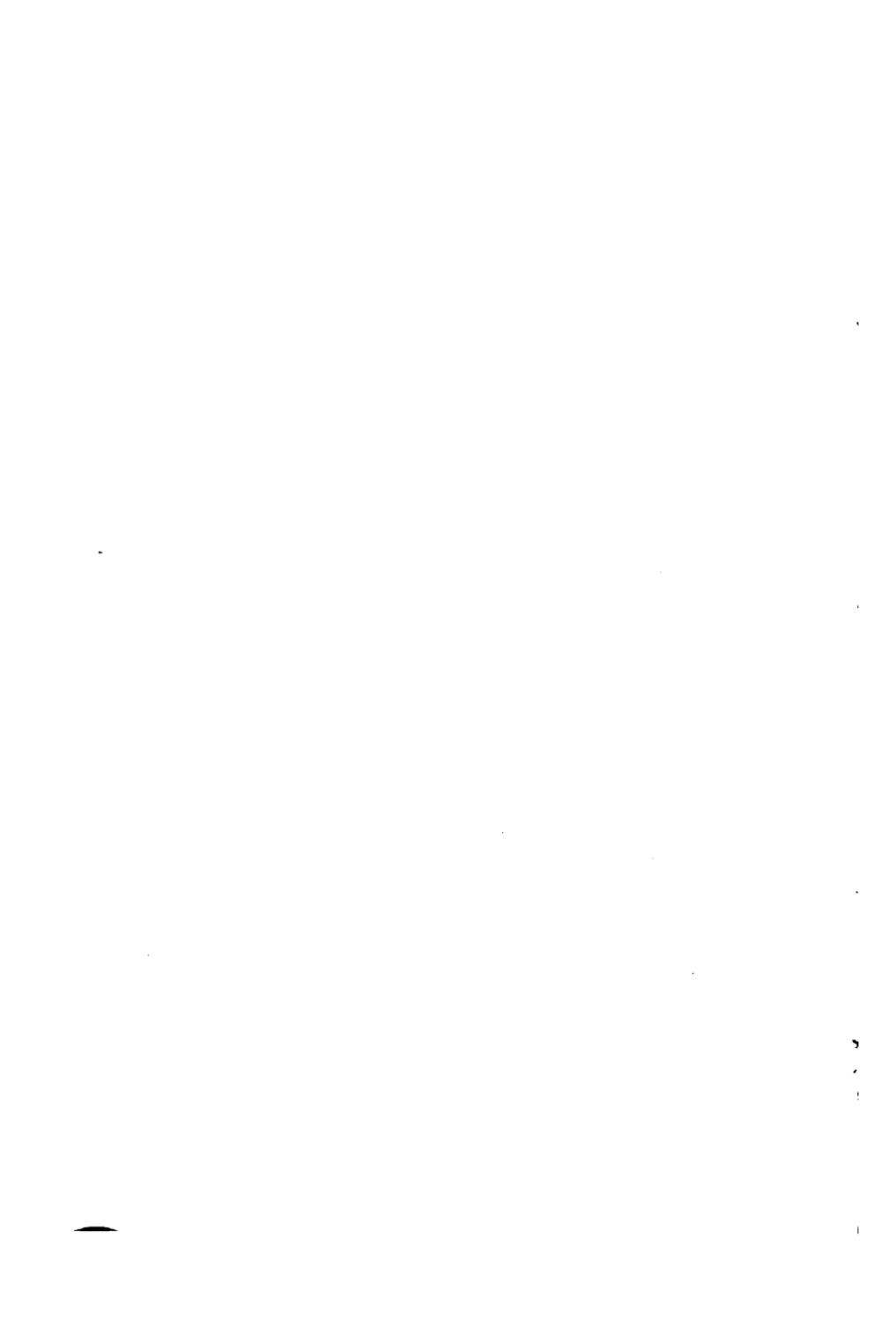


To face p. 42.

LAKE ALLEGHE, WITH MOUNT CIVETTA.

(By kind permission of Signor Simoni, of Belluno.)





old road, consisting of retaining walls and arches, hung on the mountain's side high above us. Soon the valley narrowed, and the mountains on either hand wore a grander aspect. Streams came tumbling over the face of precipices in white cascades, or, where the rocks were cleft asunder and the foundations of the mountains discovered, came rushing under our road out of narrow gorges. Passing one such long, narrow, winding cleft, the *Grotta del Principe Amadeo*, we drew up at *Stanga*, a sort of half-way house, or green toll-gate, where woodmen with their horses, peasants with their mules, shepherds with goats, sheep, and dogs, amongst which wandered barn-door fowls and other domestic animals, were huddled together, eating, drinking, and reposing. Our coachman and horses having had their refreshment we paid our twopence, and clearing out of *Stanga* came abreast of *Agre*, a place at the mouth of the lateral valley *Pegolera*, mentioned as a hospice for travellers in documents dated 1155. Ahead of us was a mountain with, as it were, the giant apse of a cathedral on its summit. It was *Monte Coro* (the Choir Mount), and as it descended in sheer precipices to the river's edge, our road crossed to the other bank of the river by the bridge of *Muda*, so called from a hamlet of low-built huts, scarcely distinguishable from the stones of the mountain's side on which they are built. Although we were but some 1800 feet above the sea, edelweiss was growing in abundance along the roadside. Beyond this the river flows out of a narrow gorge between lofty precipices, and here was built a strong modern fort on the site of the ancient castle of *Agordo*. The spot has witnessed many a severe conflict, and not the least notable that of 1848, when the mountaineers repulsed the Austrians, not by powder and shot, but by sending down upon them their *cavalleria della montagna*—rocks and stones—which they hurled upon their heads from the cliffs above. Recrossing the river to its left bank, and passing up the gorge at a dizzy height above the rushing river, bare hills and smoking heaps and black buildings attracted our attention—they were the

mines of Agordo, that have been wrought for four centuries, and are now the property of the Italian Government. Under the Venetian Republic silver and copper were extracted, which were used for coinage, now only copper is found, which is turned into sulphate of copper for the preservation of vines from phylloxera. After the mines the valley opened out, and trees gave us shade instead of beetling precipices. Two bridges, *Ponte Alto* and *Ponte Basso*, lay before us. A zig-zag road carried us up to their altitude, when, turning sharply round a pine-clad hill, we found ourselves in a great open basin, surrounded by magnificent mountains with a small village asleep in its centre—it was Agordo. It is beyond my purpose to enter upon a description of Agordo, so I content myself with saying it is a charming town with old houses and a large *piazza*, offering endless saunters by cool streams, walks amongst beech and oak trees, as on the *Col di Foglia*, and climbs up Dolomite peaks, like the *Pala di S. Lucano*, offering difficulties enough to tempt the bravest, stoutest Alpinist. The people themselves evidently think it a splendid place, for a young woman who had never been out of sight of the smoke of her own chimney said to us: “*Questo è l'unico posto per l'acqua, e l'aria, non c'è altro*” (This is the sole place for water and air, there is not another). And, as showing the temper of the people, I may say that when talking to the Syndic about school attendance, and remarking that although there was a compulsory clause it was not enforced, he gave me this very good answer: “We do nothing by force now in Italy.” “Then what do you do to ensure attendance?” “We deprive those who cannot read and write of all their civil rights. They are not allowed to vote in municipal or parliamentary elections. The fear of that loss is sufficient to cause parents to send their children to school.”

Agordo, I may say, is a centre for mountain climbing, and in the *piazza* the Alpine Club has its office open daily, where all particulars as to guides, ascents, &c., can be obtained.

The higher reaches of the Cordevole Valley, by which

first *Alleghe*, fourteen miles above Agordo, and then *Caprile*, two and a half miles further on, are reached, are as varied and interesting as those I have mentioned, but I must pass them over, only saying that the most picturesque old village we saw was *Cencenighe*, on the slopes of *Monte delle Anime* (Mount of Spirits), where the torrent Biois falls into the Cordevole.

About *Alleghe* I might say much. Here we sailed on its famous lake, over the tops of pine woods and villages. The walls of the houses were well below the keel of our *gondola*,—as the mountaineers call their boats,—but it took some skilful steering to prevent it from grounding on the tree-tops! The explanation of the strange phenomena is the following. A hundred years ago the place the lake occupies was a smiling, thickly-populated valley. There were no less than eight villages within its bounds, and there were gardens and cultivated fields, pasture-lands, and great pine-woods on the higher slopes. At the bottom of the valley flowed the river Cordevole, which comes down from the Austrian Tyrol, into which many mountain torrents pour their contributory waters. Towards the west end of the valley it narrowed to a gorge, above which towered a peak of *Monte Forca*, called *Piz*. Its sides were well wooded with pine trees, which concealed the fact that its strata sloped, like books piled one above another, toward the valley at an angle of 47 degrees. It was Saturday the 11th January 1771. Men engaged in the timber trade had been working on the hillside all the week, sending the wood down on the frozen snow and ice to the river below for transport to the plains. Fortunately they had all gone home, when suddenly, without any warning, the whole hill-top, and a piece of the mountain side, from 100 to 200 feet in thickness, 1000 feet in breadth, and over 2000 feet in length, slipped down into the valley below. The crashing, tumbling rocks filled up the gorge below, and rolled their masses far up the mountain on the other side. The valley was effectually closed by a rampart of rock 300 feet in height and over half-a-mile in breadth. Three villages were

buried, and ninety-five people killed. The river Cordevole met an obstacle its waters could not pierce. They were effectually dammed up. Gradually a lake was formed, the waters rising up against the barrier and spreading backward up the valley. The villagers saw their gardens and fields swallowed up, and then their saw-mills and dwelling-houses threatened by the relentless waters. Still the river flowed and the waters rose. One village was overwhelmed, then another, and another. For three months the waters rose up the sides of that mighty wall, when they overtopped it, and the river flowed on its course, pouring itself in a wild rush amongst the broken rocks. But before it did that, it had overwhelmed five villages, and formed a lake two and a half miles in length and half-a-mile in breadth. The whole valley, from Alleghe up to Caprile, was thus turned into a lake. The Cordevole river, and the other mountain torrents that watered the valley, and which now lose themselves in the lake, bring down, especially after heavy rains, immense quantities of débris from the mountains. In one year, 1882, the bed of the Cordevole was raised six feet. In this way the lake has been filled up at its shallower end, so that now it is but a little over one mile in length and a quarter of a mile of average breadth. The submerged forests of the Cordevole valley, and the submerged villages that were on its slopes, are those we saw and passed over in our gondola. The peasants say that in winter when the lake is covered with ice, if it is clear of snow, they can peer down into the roofless houses, and see the doors and broken staircases, and at one place a large *palazzo*, which was probably the Municipality of the place.

When we leave out of view the ugly scar on the mountain, and the sad story of villages and fields and forests buried under fallen rock and water forty fathoms deep, the whole scene is lovely in the extreme. The water of the lake is clear, and of the deepest green; around it still on every side are slopes of pines, and villages of white houses with their patches of oats and potatoes around their doors.

Old-fashioned mills are piled one above another up the torrent beds. Behind all tower, like sentinels, the white peaks of the Dolomites, rising ten and twelve thousand feet into the air. To the south is the great and famous chain of the Civetta, its lower slopes affording in summer pasture for goats and cattle, above which are wilder heights still covered with trees and herbage, and then above all rise the 4000 feet high precipices of red and white dolomite, capped with snow and ice, unscaled and unscalable from Alleghe—its glory and defence.

I have wandered already further from Belluno than I intended, but as *Caprile*—a small village of but five hundred inhabitants, lying on a tongue of land between the Cordevole and the Fiorentina Valley that leads to Selva, and so surrounded by lofty mountains that it seems the end of the world—is almost within hail of Alleghe, I must take the reader there also. In old prints this tongue of land is shown to have been twenty-five or thirty feet above the rivers, the beds of which now overtop it, and the place is only saved from being swept away by great walls and embankments, built in part by the Republic of Venice, of which Caprile was always a devoted ally. Every time these rivers come down in flood their beds are raised, and after the great flood of 1872 the bed of the Cordevole rose eight feet. The part of Caprile at the confluence of the rivers is called *Piazza del Forno*, because here were the furnaces for the smelting of ore from Alleghe. Beyond this is the *Contrada di San Marco*, a wide street, at the end of which is a stone column twelve feet high surmounted by a little bronze Lion of St. Mark without wings. There are some good old houses with round-headed doors, Gothic windows, and beaten-out iron balconies of effective pattern. One of these had beaten-out iron doors which were recently sold to an Englishman for over a hundred pounds. The town then creeps up a steep ascent to the church, where we saw two sixteenth-century banners of St. Mark. One was too torn to leave its sheath; the other, which we unfurled, was

of blue and yellow silk, with the Lion of St. Mark, and the arms of Caprile in its centre. The ambition of the inhabitants of Caprile is to possess a piece of land, and they often pay large sums to obtain it. They make money by going into Austria, France, and other countries as chair-makers. Caprile we felt was not a place to stop in, but to go away from. It is a splendid centre for Alpinists who care to scale the Marmolada (10,800 feet), Pelmo (10,600 feet), and other lofty peaks in the neighbourhood. Lists of Guides, authorised by the Alpine Club, are to be had in the hotels. Before leaving Caprile I must say that a most splendid view of the village, valley of the Cordevole, and Monte Civetta is obtained by going up the gorge of the Cordevole to where it bends eastward. Looking then down the valley, in the foreground there is the river flanked by precipices and green pine-clad slopes; beyond this its broad channel stretches to the white houses of Caprile; and then the valley sinks down and down until finally it is shut in by the great mass of Civetta, whose lower half is purple porphyry clad with green pines, above which rise the great upright stalks and towers of Dolomite peaks, and over all the glaciers of its highest summit glistening in the rays of the western sun.

Before we left the mountains towards the end of September we heard that one of those disastrous village fires that happen from time to time in the Dolomites had taken place, and Caprile was no more. Every house, with the exception of the two hotels, had been burned to the ground, and the poor inhabitants had lost their all—even their 1895 harvest, which had just been gathered. The Prefect of Belluno at once obtained help from the Government, the towns and villages scattered amongst the mountains sent aid, and travellers in these places and in Venice did the same, so that their immediate wants were met, and Caprile will by-and-by be rebuilt. It will never, however, be the same, for plain stone buildings will certainly take the place of its old smoke-blackened picturesque wooden houses.

Our comfortable quarters in the *Albergo alle Alpi*, and

these delightful walks and excursions, tempted us to linger on at Belluno, secure of gaining health, instruction, and enjoyment; but the great Piave Valley leading into the heart of Cadore, with all its associations and beauties, lay before us, and so, anticipating all kinds of new interests and pleasures, we packed up our traps, and prepared to start on the first carriage stage of our journey.

CHAPTER IV

BELLUNO TO PERAROLO

Polpet—Vedoja—Soverenza—Salto del Lupo—Fontogna—Forno di Zoldo—Longarone—Castel Lavazzo—Canale del Piave—Termine—Ospitale and Sottospitale—Rivalgo and Riccorbo—Macchietto and Peron—Perarolo.

(Distance 23 miles ; ascent of road 460 feet. Postal Diligence leaves Belluno daily at 10.30 A.M. and 12 P.M., arriving at Perarolo at 2.30 P.M. and 4 A.M ; fare 3 fr. 30 c., *coupé* 50 c. extra ; private carriage with one horse 14 fr., with two horses 24 fr.

Inns at Perarolo—*Coronna d'Oro* (old-fashioned and home-like); *St. Anna.*)

OUR experience of the weather at Belluno had taught us that we could count pretty confidently on the earlier part of the day being fine, but that often towards afternoon and evening a sharp thunderstorm, with a downpour of rain, would break over the hills. We therefore resolved to make an early start for Perarolo, for although it is only twenty-three miles up the Piave Valley there was no saying how long we might linger by the way. A diligence, carrying mails, passengers, and luggage, leaves Belluno every morning, running, with connections, the whole extent of our great mountain highway, but for comfort and independence, a private carriage is far preferable.

On a brisk, clear July morning, to the loud cracking of our coachman's whip, our pair of bays started off at a good pace, and our carriage, rattling down a narrow, roughly paved street, swung sharply round at the bottom of it, and

we were once more in the *Campitello*. Crossing it in an eastward direction, and passing the ancient church of *San Stefano*, with the old Roman sarcophagus by its door, our road took us up the right bank of the Ardo, to where a high stone bridge crosses that river, when we gained once again the valley of the Piave. As a rule the old roads of this region were at a higher level than the modern ones. To find traces of them one has generally to scan the mountain sides above, but at this point of the valley we saw the old road and the old bridge far below us at the village of Nogarè, near to where the Ardo falls into the Piave. By the side of the highway some houses for working men were being built, and I am sure it would have delighted Mr. Ruskin to see Gothic windows with cusps, all made of brick, being put in, such as are only to be found in a few very old houses in Venice.

The valley is here wide and open, and between the road and the broad Piave river on our right, and the great Monte Servo on our left, stretched acres of tall green maize, interspersed with plots of barley and potatoes, and fields of grass, gay with flowers. The harvest was at its height, and men were busy cutting the hay, while women and girls, all looking bright and cheerful, with their coloured dresses, white sleeves, and gay handkerchiefs on their heads, were singing merrily as they tossed up the mown grass in the summer sunshine, or gathered it together into tidy, shapely ricks. Carts, drawn by six and eight horses, bearing great pine-trees from the mountains, and cut wood from the saw-mills, passed us on their way to the Belluno railway station.

When about three miles from Belluno the road, following a bend in the river, turns sharply to the south-east towards *Ponte nelle Alpi*, a lofty bridge across the Piave. This is the place where the Meschio Valley, at the other end of which is the Serravalle 'Vestibule' and the Vittorio railway station (see *Chap. I.* p. 10) joins the Piave Valley. This angle, however, we cut off, passing along a lovely acacia lane which carried us by a little chapel called the "Madonna of September" to **Polpet**. Polpet, so named, it is said, from

the Roman family *Pollia*, is a little village, with vines and gourds and iris covering the fronts of its rather dilapidated buildings, and its thatch-roofed out-houses. When we struck the road again where it resumed its original direction we were close to the Piave river, which here begins to narrow, Mount Serva on one side and Mount Dolada on the other forming a kind of portal. Below the road is the village of *Vedoja*, and opposite it, across the river, that of **Soverenza**, which can only be reached by fording the Piave, always a more or less dangerous thing to do, or by going some miles round to find a bridge. Although a very old place it looks new, for in 1874 most of its ancient wooden houses were destroyed by fire, and stone ones have taken their place.

It is always a difficult thing for a coachman to pass a way-side inn, and so, at the lonely one by the *Ponte dei Frari*, a bridge across a torrent that comes tumbling down the *Val del Molino* (the valley of the mill), our driver had to stop to water his horses and himself, and to share with them a piece of bread. North of Soverenza, at a little distance back from the river, rises the great isolated peak of Spitz-Digona, to the top of which in 1848 a daring villager climbed, and planted the red, white, and green flag of Italy, which, seen far and wide up and down the valley, encouraged his countrymen in their struggles to throw off the Austrian yoke.

If we saw no boats on the river, we saw not a few *zattere*, or rafts, bearing timber down to the sea, gliding beautifully on their way, each skilfully piloted, past shoals and loose floating tree-trunks, by half-a-dozen men, who worked four long rudders, two in front and two behind. At one place a raft had got stranded, and the men, standing in the water up to their waists, were pulling and pushing with might and main to set it free. If shouting and bawling could have effected it, this would have been speedily accomplished, for they awoke the echoes of the hills at every "strong pull and long pull."

We now crossed a *boa* of *ghiaia*—that is, a run of broken

dolomite, generally the result either of a fall of rock high up the mountain, or of the swelling of some torrent. These rivers of stone are found everywhere among the Dolomites, and this was but the first of a long series we met with. They are often the cause of terrible disasters, burying villages, or stopping rivers, and thus producing serious inundations, besides creating many minor inconveniences, such as breaking roads, and carrying away bridges.

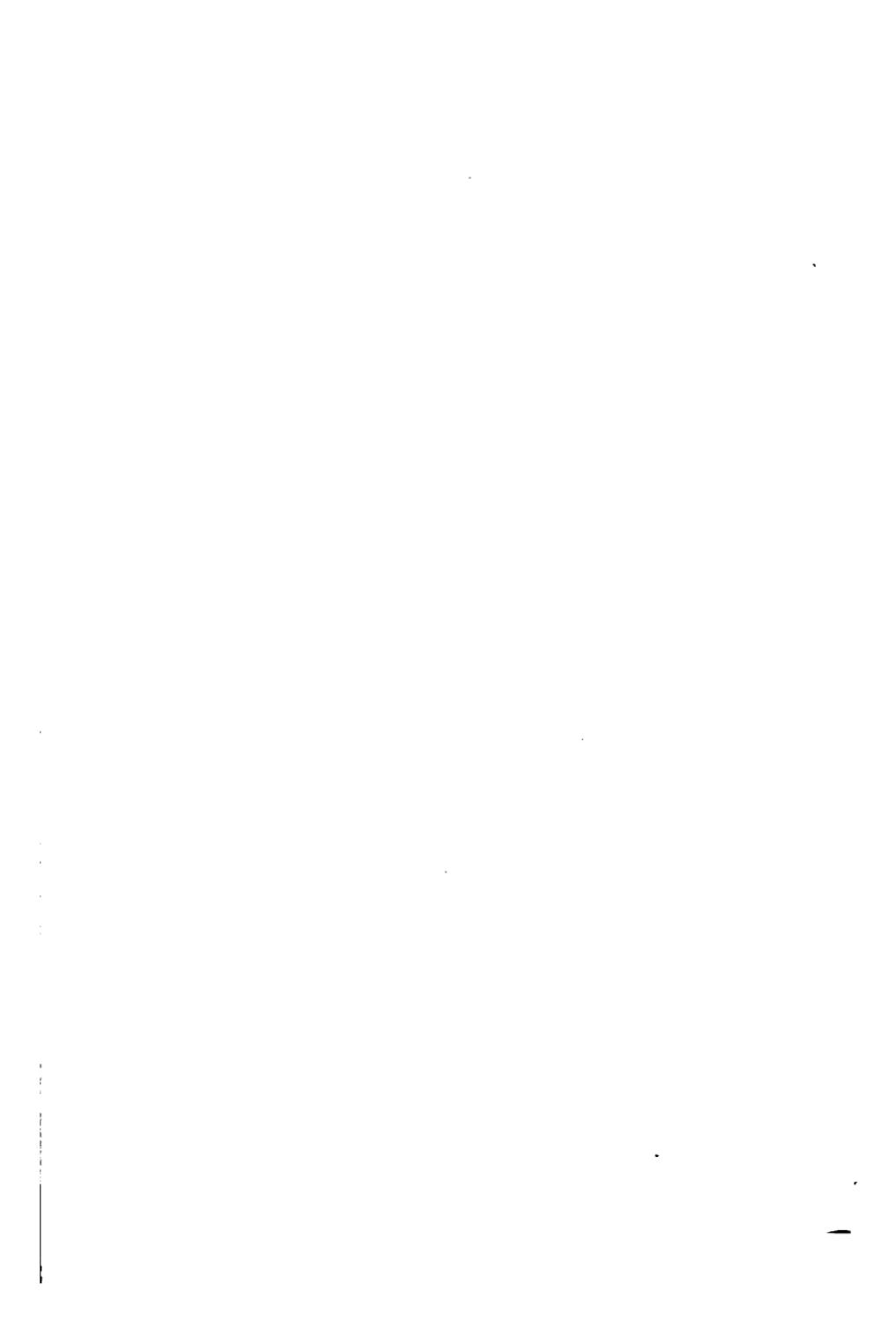
We next passed under the **Salto del Lupo** (the leap of the wolf), a beautiful double cascade made by a torrent, part of which leaps over a precipice three hundred feet in height, while part of it buries itself in the rock and then suddenly springs out of a cavern a hundred feet below. Whether the wolf leaped from the edge of the precipice above, or from the cavern in its face below, we cannot say.

Fortogna was our next village, beyond which our road was carried along the mountain side, with strong walls to protect it from landslips and falling rocks. Formerly it passed up the bed of the Piave, and its course is marked by the telegraph posts. In a few minutes we came from under the cliffs into an open space, the mouth of a gorge, down which came dancing merrily a small stream. It was the torrent Dessedan in its summer mood. We had proof before us that its winter mood is something very different. Here was a great destructive *boa* of white stones, half-a-mile in breadth, that its fierce impetuous waters had brought down. The road through it had been newly opened, and men were raising great bulwarks of solid masonry to guard against a second invasion. Below us, almost on a level with the bed of the river, was a large house standing cosily in a little pine-wood near a small lake with an island in its centre. It is a little oasis, into which one Antonio Talacchini transformed a piece of stony and sandy desert some twenty or thirty years ago. Thus the work of destruction and renovation goes on in this country. The family Talacchini use the house for a *villeggiatura*, or summer's stay. It would be a dangerous winter's abode, for, when the river is in flood, it almost surrounds it. A couple of boats,

or, as I should call them, 'gondolas,' were being rowed about, one filled with merry children, and the other with their seniors, fishing for trout, with which the lake abounds.

We now passed the first, since leaving Belluno, of those saw-mills that are found at intervals from this point up the banks of the Piave all the way to Perarolo, which have existed from earliest times, giving employment to many people, and being a fruitful source of wealth to not a few. It is a good thing for an artist to have an interest in some business besides his profession, and he has high authority for it, for Titian possessed one of these mills, in which he always maintained his interest, even at the height of his fame. The quantity of wood piled around these mills seemed enormous, and more was being constantly floated into them. To direct the flow of water, or to protect the road from being undermined by the river, *cavalletti*, the triangular-shaped erections with platforms for stones that we had seen on the way to Belluno, were here supplemented by great baskets filled with stones, each able to hold a ton-weight of them or more. These are called *gabbioni*, and the name is found in chroniclers of the thirteenth century, and they may have been in use even long before that time.

We now crossed by a new iron bridge the torrent Maè, a tributary of the Piave. The old one of wood and stone had lately been carried away by this mountain stream, swollen to the dimensions of a big river by the autumn rains. The damage done here, however, was nothing compared to the destruction of property and loss of life it occasioned at **Forno di Zoldo**, a village eleven miles up the stream. Many houses were swept away, and many lives were lost. One of the chief families of the place, numbering seventeen people, lived in a large building beside the stream. The waters surrounded it and cut off all retreat. The inmates lit up all their windows to attract attention, and called for help. The neighbours gathered on the banks of the torrent, but nothing could be done. The house was seen to tremble and shake,





LONGARONE.

To face p. 55.

(By kind permission of Signor Unterreger, of Trento.)

then, moving all of a piece, collapsed and disappeared in the black, roaring waters. Sixteen persons were drowned; one child alone, the sole surviving member of the family, was saved, being that night in charge of a relation who lived at a distance, and who thought it was too stormy to carry the child home.

Circling round the face of a green hill with a white church on its summit, and meeting first some carts of bright, singing girls, each with her *gerla* (creel) going to the fields, and then some black-faced charcoal-burners, with big loads of charcoal that they had just brought down on *slitte* (sledges) from the mountains, we came suddenly upon Longarone. While our coachman rested and fed his horses at the *Albergo di Roma*, we went off to explore the place.

Longarone

(Longarone; distance from Belluno 12 miles, from Perarolo 11 miles. Height above sea-level 1515 feet. Hotels—*Posta* and *Roma*.

From Longarone a carriage road conducts up the valley of the Maè torrent to Forno di Zoldo, 11 miles. Height above Longarone 1420 feet, or 2935 above sea-level. Diligence leaves daily at 6 A.M., arriving at 9 A.M.; fare 2 fr. Inn—*Stella*.)

The name Longarone is thought by some to be derived from the cognomen of a Roman family, for many names having such an origin are to be found here, but more probably it is from the position of the place, which it accurately describes—*Lungo* signifying 'along,' and *Airone* being the name of the mountain at the foot of which it is built. Its position is a dangerous one, and so, to protect it from landslips, great walls, like fortifications, run in parallel lines above it on the mountain side, and also serve to support a series of terraced gardens. They were raised during a time of famine in 1817, by a wealthy family called Sartori, who by this means not only protected

the place, but gave employment to many of their poorer neighbours. Longarone has over a thousand inhabitants, and, with its *Piazza Margherita* and *Piazza Maggiore*, with its old palaces, its shops, its theatre, its municipality, its post-office, its Savings-bank, its schools and church, has quite a town-like appearance. Unfortunately it has next its Savings-bank a National Lottery office, which is a formidable rival. In Italy £9,000,000 sterling, drawn chiefly from the pockets of the poor, is gambled away annually.

The church in the *Piazza Maggiore* has no pictures of note, but it has some good carved seats and chairs, and a wealth of priests' robes. Some of these were ancient and some were modern, the former easily distinguishable by their superior colouring and workmanship, and by their weight, owing to the great amount of solid gold wrought into them. As we passed out of Longarone we saw a *Teatro sociale*. It is a small place in Italy that has not such an institution, where the *signori* and *signore* appear in evening costume and visit each other in their boxes. Just beyond the town, below the road, on a level with the bed of the river, there is a good dwelling-house, with a tastefully laid out garden, a well-stocked saw-mill, and an iron bridge spanning the river. It was the property of a Scotsman, the late Alexander Malcolm, who began life as a dock porter in Venice, and rose to be one of its leading timber-merchants. He was a man not to be beaten by anything, for the iron bridge we saw was the third he had thrown across the river, and if it, too, had been carried away he had intended to build a fourth.

A few minutes after leaving Longarone we came to **Castel Lavazzo**, a place that has interesting Roman associations. It is at present a small village at the foot of a rock, with a deep cutting in it through which the road passes. Originally there was no cutting, and the village was on the big flat table-top of the rock, which, descending precipitously towards the river, blocked the valley. Climbing to the top of the half of the rock next the river, we found that it had been converted into a *Campo Santo*. The

gravestones lay flat on the ground and looked strange, for they had large oval holes cut in them as if for slipping coffins through into the vaults below. I believe that they were used for this purpose, for I know that at Civita Vecchia there was a cemetery with 365 such vaults—one for each day of the year. The bodies of those who died each day were slipped indiscriminately, uncoffined, through the oval opening into the vault for the day, which was then closed till the corresponding day of the following year. Such cemeteries, I have been told, were common throughout the Papal States. When Italy became a united kingdom they were done away with. Around this burying-ground were the thirteen Stations of the Cross marked by shrines of stone, each containing a cross and a number. At one end of the *Campo Santo* stood the parish church, a substantial stone building with good columns, and with the Evangelists with their books and symbols painted in its apse. The *campanile* beside it has often served as a watch-tower.

Here, then, we stood on the site of the old *Castrum Lebatii* of the Romans, which they fortified against the Norici. It was here the Roman legions wintered in A.D. 43, when sent by the Emperor Nero under the command of Tiberius and Drusus to conquer Cadore. The position was well chosen, for it commands the valley both up and down the river. At this point the valley begins to narrow, and we could see the spot, on a jutting rock a few hundred yards off, where the Romans, to still further protect their camp, built a fort, with walls descending into the river on both sides, thus effectually shutting in the valley. The fort was called *Gardona*, from a small torrent beside it, and the place still bears the name *Porta della Gardona*. The ruins of a fort mark the site, but they are those of one built by Otho, Bishop of Belluno, in 1171, and which was in use as a military defence until 1511.

An historian of Cadore, Pilloni, says that he had seen an inscription in a house here to *Giove Statare*, who was supposed to inspire soldiers with courage to stand firm

in battle, and another more recent writer speaks of it existing on the wall of a ground-floor room, in the priest's house, with the name of the Emperor Nero, which occurred in it, chiselled out. I made inquiry about it at the place indicated, but it had been taken away. Learning that not a few Roman remains were preserved in the municipality, I thought the stone might have been there too, but though there were a Roman milestone, a number of coins of the Emperors, and other things, it was not to be found. The Cadorins have a tradition that Christianity was introduced into this region by Roman soldiers. This, in all likelihood, was the case, as these soldiers during the first century became missionaries of the cross wherever they went. This tradition we found in a more exact and amplified form higher up the valley. It was interesting to find the memory of the old Roman Paganism and of the new Faith that supplanted it existing thus together.

The flat table-rock on which the old village stood is, I am sorry to say, fast disappearing, for, as the stone it yields has been found very suitable, because of its hardness and fine markings, for doorposts and lintels, hearthstones and pavements, staircases and cisterns, the inhabitants of Castel Lavazzo have become a guild of stone-cutters and stonemasons, who are gradually quarrying it all away. As we drove out of Castel Lavazzo, I read on a sundial words which I thought were very suitable to a place that recalls so vividly the flight of years, and the changes they bring—

*Segnando i passi al sol, l'ombra fugace,
La vita tua mortal misura, e tace.*

Canale is a name often applied to valleys in Italy, especially when they are narrow and shut in by mountains. And so, above Castel Lavazzo, that of the Piave is known as the **Canale del Piave**. Passing along it, under the ruins of the Gardona fortress, and through the pine slopes at the foot of Mount Sfornioi, we soon reached Termine.

Termine is a small village of about sixty houses and three hundred inhabitants. It is said to derive its name from



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APPROACH TO PERAROLO.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calalzo.)





the heathen god *Termine*. It is a very old place, being mentioned in documents of the fourteenth century. Its name, however, whatever may be its origin, correctly expresses its position, for as the valley here makes a bend to the northward, the mountains seem to shut it completely in, and it looks as if it were the termination of everything. It is also on the boundary line between Belluno and Cadore, and in the olden time it was a "carriers' quarters," or terminus for the transference of the goods of the two provinces.

Opposite the village is the beautiful cascade of the torrent *Pissa*, leaping gracefully from rock to rock; but the inhabitants of Termine view it with little pleasure, for they cannot but think of it in its winter mood, when it is a roaring cataract, bringing down the fearful avalanche that threatens the safety of the village. Piers made of strong parallel walls of wood, about eight feet apart, bound together, and with the space filled in with stones and *gabbioni*, the construction of which we have already seen, are used to protect Termine against both the cascade and the Piave. Outside the village there is by the roadside an obelisk of red stone, which records how the mountaineers gained at this place a brilliant victory over the Austrians in the revolution of 1848. The inscription runs as follows:—"1848, 7 Maggio—il forte luogo—fu scampo all' invasore—fugato alla Tovanella."

Tovanella is a lateral torrent valley some short distance further on. Between it and Termine the valley is narrow and the rocks overhang the road. Calvi, who commanded the mountaineers, laid mines in these rocks, which were to be fired as the Austrians passed beneath them. The plan so far succeeded; only, the signal having been given to apply the match before the main body of the enemy was fairly under the cliffs, the result was more of a panic and precipitate flight than a slaughter.

The river now became to us more and more a source of interest, as the saw-mills on its banks increased in number, and an abundance of logs, with here and there a well-

steered raft, floated past us. The logs were the trunks of pine-trees cut into lengths of from twelve to fourteen feet. It was interesting to see them go down the stream, sometimes two abreast, sometimes half-a-dozen chasing each other; here some had got stranded, there others were caught in an eddy and made to wheel idly round and round; but whatever their fate all showed a great deal of individuality and behaved more like living creatures than dead logs of wood. Here and there men had gone to their assistance, helping the stranded ones to get off, and guiding the wayward ones back into the current of the river. Across the river were the old saw-mills of *Davestra*, mentioned as existing as early as 1378. On this side, further on, were those of *Candidopoli*, which were left by one Candido Colletti in 1849 to the commune of Cadore, for the promotion of education in the district, and to prevent any one from obtaining a monopoly of the wood trade.

The next village we reached was a picturesque little place in two pieces, one on the shoulder of a hill, the other at its foot, and the torrent Valbona between them. The name of the upper and larger part is **Ospitale**, and that of the lower **Sottospitale**. As the name indicates there was a hospice here for travellers, and we find mention of it made in documents of the tenth century, and again in 1290 and in 1314, when certain privileges were granted to it by the Counts of Camino and the Patriarch of Aquileia. The documents of the latter period also make mention of a church of the Holy Trinity, and there is a pretty little Gothic chapel, forming part of the present church, which is thought to be the remains of that early one. We are told that the chapel contained nothing of an ancient date, but I have since heard that on its altar there are preserved some broken images, and an inscription carved in quaint Gothic characters.

Almost all these little villages have their archives, but unfortunately those of this place perished by fire in 1811.

There were two inns here that attracted our notice. One was the *Archangel Olivotto*, and the other was called

Albergo Palanca. *Palanca* means a halfpenny, but here, I suppose, it was the name of the proprietor. On the other side of the river rose the great mountain of Duranno, and beyond it that of Cima di Lares, each about 9000 feet high. Down through the midst of the pine forest that clothes the steep slopes of Duranno we saw one of those bare rocky runs which is used to precipitate wood into the river below.

The next two villages, **Rivalgo** and **Riccorbo**, have a place in both ancient and modern history. Both are mentioned in documents of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in connection with the wood trade, and both are famous in the struggle to throw off Austrian rule in 1848. Just outside the former place is another obelisk of red stone, with the inscription : "1848—8 al 28 Maggio—qui stettero—Baluardo insuperato—i petti Cadorini." It was difficult to realise, as we drove along amid scenes of peacefulness and beauty, the terrible fighting that took place here so recently. As we approached Riccorbo there was just room for the road to pass under the cliffs that overhung the Piave. Here the leader Calvi barricaded road and river, and had the cliffs undermined as at Tovanella, and men stationed with levers to hurl the shattered rocks upon the enemy. When the Austrians were trying to force the barricade, the mines were fired with disastrous results. In the pause that ensued a flag of truce was displayed by the enemy, and Calvi caused hostilities to cease, and prepared to speak with the Austrian General Stürmer, when the cry of treachery arose. Under cover of the flag the Austrians were scaling the cliffs above. The Cadorini fought with redoubled energy, and the Austrians, 5000 strong, were forced to retire. General Stürmer praised the heroism of the Cadorini, and was more than astonished afterwards to learn that they were not regular soldiers, but only undisciplined mountaineers.

I had heard of wire ropes being sometimes stretched across great gullies and rivers for the conveyance of materials, and at **Macchietto** and **Peron**, two groups of

houses we now came to, we saw one in use. It was stretched over the river from where we were to the shoulder of a hill a thousand feet away and some three thousand feet above us. Big bundles of hay, swung to the wire by hooks, were making a swift aerial voyage across the chasm. Sometimes, when the hay harvest is over, the more daring of the workers get into a basket and come down as their hay does—a rather dangerous proceeding.

The valley at Macchietto and Peron bends more northward, and a lateral gorge opens up eastward, that of the *Valmontina* torrent, and magnificent views are obtained. Looking up this lateral valley, we saw away beyond its pine-clad slopes the castellated peaks of Cima di Lares against the eastern sky. To the northward rose to view half-a-dozen peaks of the great serrated range of Marmarole, with the well-wooded slopes of Mount Zucco in front. Southward, behind us, towered one of the peaks of Duranno, built up of successive beds of rock sloping back from the river, while to the west were the beautiful pine-woods that clothe the sides of Dubiea. At our feet the Piave was hurrying on its way, its waters busily useful in bearing into the saw-mills on its banks the timber that had been brought down from the distant forests of Comelico; or bearing out of them, and onward towards Venice, that same timber cut and prepared for use.

As we passed onward to Perarolo, along our road, which was now cut into the mountain's side and now buttressed up above the river by walls and bulwarks, the scenery was full of beauty. There was an equal fascination in looking downward and watching the rushing waters of the Piave, and the varied movements and fortunes of the timber it bore resistlessly along, and in looking upward to the calm blue sky that showed here and there through the tops of the stately pines that clad the slopes above us.

Another bend of the road brought us in sight of **Perarolo**, lying at the junction of the Boite with the Piave. The valley between us and it was broad and open, and the river seemed literally alive with wood, and with long

serpentine piers and other arrangements for running it into the saw-mills. One mill was pointed out to us called *Ansogne*. It belonged to Titian's family both before and after the great painter's day, and it was in this mill that all his life he had an interest. Two saws, we were told, belonged to him. And he seems not to have been quite a sleeping-partner, but to have taken an active interest in the wood business, for among the minutes of the Commune of Piève we find one to this effect: "June 18, 1566. Deliberated to have painted in fresco by Tiziano Vecelli the vaulted roof of the Church of St. Maria, for the sum of 200 *scudi d'oro*; to be paid in two years in wood of that value, the painter himself declaring that he is well pleased with the sum, the mode, and the time of payment." Then, nine months later, there is another entry to this effect: "March 21, 1567. There has been delivered to Titian fifty carts of wood in proportion to the labour already commenced."

Our well-butressed road did not quite sustain its character to the end. At one point between us and the Piave there was a precipice about two hundred feet in depth, and here a fall had taken place, carrying a part of the road with it. The precipice was not of solid rock, but of sand and cobble stones, so that a fall of this kind was not an unlikely occurrence. There was room, however, to pass without going too near the dangerous edge, which was temporarily barricaded off, and so getting safely beyond it, our road gradually descended until it brought us to the level of the river. Following its bank a little way, we entered Perarolo at the junction of the Boite with the Piave. Running up the side of a great mill-race that is taken off the Boite, and crossing it and the parent stream by a strong stone bridge, from which we got a glimpse of the King of Cadore, the giant mountain Antelao, with its crystal ice coronet, we drew up at *Albergo Koffler*, or *Coronna d'Oro*, a good, comfortable, old-fashioned inn.

CHAPTER V

PERAROLO

Walks to Damos and Caralto

(At confluence of Boite and Piave. Centre of the timber trade. Distance from Venice 95½ miles. Nearest railway stations—Belluno, 23 miles; Vittorio (on the Udine line), 36½ miles; Toblach, 43½ miles. Height above sea-level 1788 feet. Post and telegraph offices. Mails twice daily. Inns—*Coronna d'Oro* (old-fashioned and home-like), pension 6 fr. a day; *St. Anna*.)

As a recommendation to all travellers to make Perarolo a halting-place, the villagers have set conspicuously in the façade of one of its chief houses a marble slab recording the fact that the august Queen Margherita, and the Prince of Naples, sojourned there from August 8 to September 8, 1881, and from August 10 to September 8, 1882; and they have, further, called the road in which the house stands, *Viale Margherita*. They have in this done well, for as Perarolo lies somewhat low, at the junction of the Boite and Piave rivers, and as it is very much shut in by the hills and mountains that rise immediately around it, one does not at once feel drawn to it. But after a little acquaintance it reveals its interests and charms, and one feels with the Irishman who said: "When you see it you will see that you would have regretted it all your life if you had not seen it."

The name *Perarolo*, and the other names by which this place was once called, *Porto della Laguna* and *Ponte Porto*, have all a bearing on its situation and appearance and its



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PERAROLO.

(By kind permission of Signor Simoni, of Belluno.)



trade in timber. The quays and docks, the dams and sluices, and the piles of logs and planks lying about at the junction of the two rivers, give it the appearance which it must have had from its beginning, when the name of the Port of the Lagoons was given to it, because then, as now, its timber was mainly floated down to Venice.

Perarolo has been said to be derived from *pere*, an ancient form of *pietre* (stones), because of the great quantities of broken dolomite which the rivers bring down, but more likely it is from *ruolo* (toll), and is a contraction for *per il ruolo* (through the toll), because it was here that the Venetians, after Cadore became a part of the Republic, levied their tax upon the timber.

The earliest documents that speak of Perarolo only date from the beginning of the fourteenth century, but as they speak of it, not as a place then born, but being apparently in its manhood, we must allow its claim, in common with so many other villages in the valley, to a respectable antiquity. Probably it has shrunk somewhat from old age, for it is now but a small place of about 150 houses and 1000 inhabitants. In any case its position between the two rivers does not afford it much elbow-room, nor will the Boite and Piave, its best servants, though at times its worst enemies, long suffer it to expand freely. On October 16, 1708, the Boite came down in such flood as to carry away bulwarks, bridges, and houses, and, to quote a chronicler of the time, "left Perarolo like a picked bone without flesh and without skin" (*Perarolo rimase come un osso nudo, senza carne e senza pelle*). At present the houses flank both banks of the Piave, and the right bank of the Boite, and two long stout bridges of wood connect the several parts. Once they ran along the left bank of the Boite as well, but now there are on that side only some roofless walls, broken foundations and mounds of ruins—and thereby hangs a tale.

On October 14, 1823, the whole face of *La Saline*, a hill about two miles up the Boite, round the base of which the river sweeps, fell into the valley. The ruins formed a

barrier across the river, completely stopping its flow, until its pent-up waters formed a lake in the rocky gorge 100 feet in depth and a mile in extent. After twelve hours the immense reservoir of water burst its barrier, when the flood, let loose, bearing everything before it, trees and rocks, mills and homesteads, swept in one wild rush down upon Perarolo. Fortunately for its poor inhabitants the crash of the mountain, and the sight of the dry bed of the Boite, had given them warning. Fearing some terrible catastrophe they fled to the higher grounds, and thus saved their lives, while they had the pain of seeing their town below them "swept with the besom of destruction." The very hill on the left bank of the Boite, at the base of which are the ruins, was partially undermined; hence that part of the town was never rebuilt. On the right bank of the Boite the witnesses to the catastrophe are the recently-built houses, and an old weather and water beaten *campanile* that stands deserted and solitary near the water's edge. The church to which it once belonged went down with the flood, and the one that took its place stands further removed from the river. I am afraid it would not take a very strong flood to make it, too, collapse, for its walls and vaulted roof are full of gaping cracks, the result of earthquake shocks to which it has been subjected. The disaster is spoken of as *La Rovina del Ventitre* (The Ruin of Twenty-three), and there are some still living who can recall it. A poem in Latin, descriptive of it, was published in 1835 by Antonio de Lorenzi, a native of Perarolo, with the title *Perarolensis Ruina*.

The Piave, although it has more than once carried away its bridge,—the last time it did so being about ten years ago,—has been kinder to those who chose its banks for their abode than its companion, the Boite. It has apparently allowed their houses to stand from age to age, and so they are, especially those at *Zordi* on its left bank, very old-fashioned indeed. They are built of wood, having, however, foundations of stone. Heavy wooden balconies, called *piuli*, which are reached by outside wooden staircases, give access

to each floor, and the roofs are 'slated' with wood. There are few or no chimneys—though those there are are very graceful—and the smoke generally finds its way out by doors and windows, as their blackened appearance testifies. This is the old Cadore type of house, and it is quaint and picturesque. Even the smoke-stains may be viewed as an advantage both from an art and utilitarian point of view, preserving the wood, and giving it a few warm touches of colour.

The only protection which, until lately, the inhabitants of Perarolo seem to have had against these dreadful river disasters were the *gabbioni*, which indeed are still in use, but now they have constructed great massive stone bulwarks and breakwaters, so that we are likely to hear less of them in the future.

From the bridges good views are obtained, especially in the morning, when the mountain-tops are clear of cloud and mist. Looking up the Boite Valley one sees, rising majestically into the blue sky, the highest mountain of Cadore, Antelao, its lower slopes clothed with pine, its upper ones without a speck of verdure, but with that lovely soft downy colouring which Dolomite peaks alone possess, and wearing above all a jewelled crown of eternal ice. Looking down the Piave one sees, fronting each other from either side of the river, the well-wooded spurs of Dubiea and Duranno, the latter with its great stratified summit sloping back from the valley. Looking up the valley, there is visible, on our right hand, the *Pala di Lau* with its turreted peaks, and on our left *Monte Zucco* with its overhanging cliffs.

From our standpoint on the bridge we can see that there is little agricultural work to be done at Perarolo. This is not because of its elevation, for it is less than two thousand feet above the sea-level, but because there is no arable ground. Where clearances have been made on the steep pine slopes, little patches of maize and potatoes, flax and barley are grown, but these are only like cottage gardens. Up among the mountains there are, here and

there, stretches of level plains where rich pastures grow, and to these the villagers take their goats and cows, and their few sheep and oxen in the summer. And these plains and mountains also furnish them with hay for the support of their cattle during the long hard winter, and there too they find wood for their household fires. But all these things only afford employment to the women and children.

And what do the men do? We shall soon see, for while we have been standing on the bridge something has been constantly diverting our attention from the immovable hills above us to the restless waters at our feet. The bridge has ever and anon been struck with a dull thud that sends a shiver through it. It is as if battering-rams were being used against its slender wooden piers, and indeed such has been the case. Only the battering-rams consist of logs of wood impelled by the strength of the current. Down the stream they come in steady lines from early morn till dewy eve. The bulk sail majestically under the arches of the bridge, many hit the piers, to bound off, broadside on, into the current, some get stranded on rocks and gravelly shallows, others entangled in whirlpools revolve fruitlessly with the circling waters, while not a few get aground on the river's banks. It is fascinating to watch them, for, as I have before remarked, they seem like living creatures, and no two behave exactly alike. And their number seems countless. This is not to be wondered at, for, as we afterwards learned, upwards of sixty thousand trees are felled annually in the great forests in the hearts of the mountains, where the Piave and Boite rivers have their rise. While some of these—giants among them, such as those grown in the Government forest of San Marco, which measure 160 feet in length, fitted to be the masts “of some tall admiral”—are dragged on rollers or wheels to the plains, the great bulk are barked, then sawn into lengths of fourteen feet each, then slid down the *risini* (paths lined with wood) into the rivers, when all, sooner or later, find their way to Perarolo, where, as we have seen, the Piave and Boite unite their waters. Over two hundred thousand of such lengths of tree-trunks come

down the Piave, and about thirty thousand down the Boite. That is how it is that these rivers are literally full of timber. In the sixteenth century the owners of horses and carts raised a strong opposition against the floating of wood down the Piave. The question was referred to Venice, with which Cadore was then united, and the Council of Ten decided that of every hundred loads, seventy should be floated and thirty carted.

It was long a puzzle to us to know how each mill-owner could identify his own timber, and how after that he could get hold of it. We were told to walk a short distance up either river and the mystery would be solved. Accordingly without loss of time we started up the Piave.

When we had gone about a mile, we found that the banks of the river rose abruptly until they became sheer precipices of some hundreds of feet in height. At the mouth of this gorge, where the river is deep and narrow, and runs like a race-horse, there is thrown across it a strong wooden erection like a covered bridge, with a portcullis attached, which descends into the water. This is called a *cidolo*, and by means of it the flow of timber can be stopped or regulated. Just above the *cidolo* the river winds and bends between its high banks, so that the wood gets a check in its course, otherwise it would soon block up, and bear down the *cidolo*. Indeed most of it is arrested, and tens of thousands of logs fill up the channel from bank to bank. But near the *cidolo* a bit of water is always kept clear as a free passage for the timber. On the *cidolo* itself, and on the piles of logs on either side of it, men were stationed, armed with *anghieri*—long stout poles with sharp hooks and spikes. With these the men, who are called *menadori*, detach the logs from each other when the current fails to do so, and push them off into the centre of the current, when they go plunging out of sight in the rapids under the *cidolo*.

It is a perilous occupation, and sometimes a man gets pulled into the vortex after his log. Generally that means death ; but there was one man there who had gone through

the terrible experience and survived it. At a short distance below the *cidolo*, where the river is broad and the current less strong, a palisade, built on a low sunken wall, crosses it in a slanting direction. This is called a *rosto*, and by means of it all the wood and much of the water is diverted into a large *roggia* or mill-race. On this mill-race are sluices, beside which men are stationed with poles similar to those used at the *cidolo*. Each log, we found, had two sets of markings. These consisted of straight lines, about six inches long, cut at different angles. They looked like hieroglyphics. They were letters, however, formed roughly with the stroke of an axe, or with a peculiarly shaped iron instrument made specially for this purpose. One set of markings told where the timber was cut, the other were the initials of the mill-owner to whom it belonged. The men at the sluices examined the markings of every log. This they did very quickly, not touching them with their hands, and hardly stopping them in their course. With their *anghieri* they checked their speed, rolled them over in the water till the markings came up, and a glance was sufficient to enable them to read them. Those that belonged to their master were pushed past the sluice, to be borne onward to the saw-mill; those that belonged to others were sent through the sluice into the river again.

At the saw-mill below Perarolo, there is another *rosto* and *roggia*, and all the wood goes through another similar examination and selection. The second mill-owner picks out his own wood and sends the rest on its way. This is repeated at every mill down the whole length of the river as far as Longarone, where is the last mill, which, as I have said, belonged to a Scotsman, who took all that came to him, and let us hope that he got "all his own at least."

On the Boite river above Perarolo, near the foot of *Monte Saline* where the landslip occurred, there is another *cidolo* for the regulation of the timber that comes down that river. These are the only two in all Cadore. These *cidoli* are open, roughly speaking, during the first and third quarters of the year, during which time the work of passing the logs

to the mills goes on ; and they are closed during the second and fourth quarters, when the logs are allowed to accumulate above the *cidoli*. At sunset the portcullises are dropped, so that no wood is allowed to pass down the rivers till the "rosy fingers" of the dawn have once more opened "the gates of day" and "touched the hills with gold."

We found the saw-mills to be full of interest. Great heaps of logs arranged and classified as to kind and quality, lie everywhere on tiny islands amid the rushing waters. In one case we saw pine-trunks, bearing the same forest mark, being carefully separated into different lots, and I asked why that was done. Was not the wood of the same kind of tree grown on the same hill-side the same in quality? "Far from it," was the answer. "Where the tree has plenty of soil and moisture and shelter from wind its wood is soft and inferior. Where it has a bare, barren soil, and exposure to storm and tempest, it is firm and tough, and in every way superior." It was the old story of the struggle for life being necessary for goodness and for greatness. I could not help thinking of what had been pointed out to me, in years gone by, by the fishermen of the Orkney Islands, of the difference between fish caught near the shore, and those caught out in the racing currents. While the former were soft and flabby, and sometimes sickly, the latter were always strong and firm and well-flavoured. In the same way there are few fish of excellent quality caught in the still, tepid waters of the Mediterranean, or the Adriatic, and never one among the swarms in the canals of Venice. To be too well off and to have too little to do is enough to ruin any living thing. Leaving the stacks of wood, we entered the sheds, where we saw great greedy saws, with big powerful teeth, eating their way through the thickest logs, the whole fabric shaking and trembling above the rushing waters as they pursued, without a break or breath, their devouring task. As there is an abundance of water-power it does not take long to transform the most massive tree-trunk into boards and beams.

Next comes the process of raft-building, for almost all the cut wood is transferred in that form once more to the river highway by which it reaches its destination. The spent water of the lake forms below the mill a little pond, or harbour. Girls carry the wood to its edge on their shoulders. There the planks are tied up with willow wands into bundles of six or eight each. A dozen of these are floated out side by side, and all bound together. This forms the first part of the raft. A second part is made in the same way and fastened behind it, with willow wands as couplings thrust through overlapping boards. Then a third, a fourth, and a fifth, are similarly added, until a river train is made up, about sixty feet long, and fifteen feet broad, containing from 1000 to 1500 planks. The front of it, that breasts the current, is next protected by a cross beam, and a few cross boards are used to give it additional steadiness and solidity. It is then fitted with oars. These are roughly made of long poles, with bits of wood for blades tied to them with the unfailing willow wand. Two of these are fixed at the prow of the raft and two at the stern, for they are used to steer the raft, not to propel it. The crew now takes possession of it, and eight men generally form a raft's complement, four of whom work the front oars, two those behind, and two are free as emergency men. As the water often washes the raft from stem to stern, the raftsmen strip for their work, and to keep their boots, stockings, coats, and other garments dry—for when their voyage is over they have to return by land—they have an ingenious arrangement. Screwing their augers into a plank all in a row, the curved handles form a kind of cradle, and on these they tie their clothes. When all is ready the "anchors are weighed," or rather the ropes that have held it in the dock or harbour are let go, and off the raft starts, plunging over the rushing waters.

The river is divided into raft stages where the crews are changed. Those for example who man the raft at Perarolo leave it at Longarone; those who take it in charge

there leave it at Belluno, and thus it is conducted from station to station till San Donà on the Adriatic is reached. At that point a great many rafts are united, and on a flowing tide they are swept into the lagoons, and conducted to the wood-yards in Venice. Longarone station is thirteen miles off, and when the river is in flood a raft goes down in half-an-hour, in the summer when the water is low it takes a couple of hours. Over three thousand rafts, containing upwards of four million planks, are floated down the Piave river annually.

I made some inquiry as to how the men are paid. Those at the *cidoli* begin work at 4.30 in the morning and cease work at 7.15 in the evening. Their working day is thus fifteen hours, less fifteen minutes. For this they are paid from 1 fr. 25 c. (1s. od.) to 1 fr. 75 c. (1s. 5d.) per day, with food, which consists of three meals of polenta (Indian corn) and cheese, with a *litre* of wine once a week, and no time allowed in which to eat their food—they must consume it as they can. The raftsmen get 2 fr. (1s. 7d.) per voyage, but they have to walk back to their starting-place. Of course living is cheap, but not so cheap as one would think, for as the country does not produce enough food for its inhabitants, many things have to be imported at enhanced rates. The men feel that they are much underpaid, for their masters on the fruit of their labour acquire large fortunes.

The women and children to whom I have referred as the hay-makers and wood-gatherers work as hard as the men. At daybreak they are off to the great plateaux among the mountains, to reach which often involves a climb of two or three hours, and after a hard day's work they return in the evening, each with a heavy burden of wood or hay on her back. This work soon bends and ages them. A girl of twelve, when told to stand with straight back and shoulders, will say, "*Ho già preso la piega*" (I have already taken the bend). No wonder they are called *bestie di somma* (beasts of burden). Queen Margherita, when staying at Perarolo, drew the attention of those in authority to

this state of matters, saying, "*Le donne lavorano troppo, e pur belle e vigorose come sono, invecchiano primo del tempo*" (The women work too hard, and beautiful and vigorous as they are, they age before their time).

Perarolo is not a centre specially adapted for mountain climbing, although the Queen of Italy, when here in the autumn of 1881 and 1882, made a great many ascents, but it affords excellent scope to those who are good pedestrians. There are lovely walks to be had in shady pine-woods, and splendid views to be obtained from the hill-tops all around. And every place is free and open, so that one can go unchallenged where he chooses. Not only so, but several of the walks lead to ancient hamlets that give them an additional point and interest. I shall mention but two of these—one to Damos and the other to Caralto. Damos is an ancient Greek village, and Caralto an ancient Roman one. Both are situated on mountain plateaux easily reached.

Damos

Damos is on the right bank of the Piave behind the first spurs of *Monte Zucco*, and Caralto, on its left bank, is behind a low, well-wooded hill of the same name as itself.

Damos can be reached in two ways, either by going directly up over the spurs of *Monte Zucco*, behind that portion of Perarolo that lies along the right bank of the Piave; or by going round these spurs by the highway, and then striking up a green valley between them and the main mountain. The former way is a climb of one, and the latter is a walk of two hours. We went by the one and returned by the other. We found Damos to consist of but four houses, and a little church with a *campanile*. But chapel and village are the oldest in Cadore. A Roman highway passed by it, and it is mentioned frequently in records of the time of the Emperors.

The little church is dedicated to St. Andrew, and has his figure in fresco above the door. Inside there are several interesting frescoes. On the arch wall of its apse

there is an Annunciation, and in the apse itself the Adoration of the Shepherds, the Circumcision, the Adoration of the Magi, and Christ teaching in the Temple. The altarpiece is claimed by the villagers as by Titian, but it is probably only by one of the Vecellio family. There is also a fine old crucifix. Entering one of the houses, that of Giuseppe Damin, we found a big fire burning in the centre of the room and the goodwife baking bread, with three bright little children about her. We remarked on their cleanliness, when she replied: "We are poor, but though *non si può vesterli con pompa* (though we cannot dress them with pomp) we like them to be clean." Opening directly out of the kitchen, under the one roof, we found the cow-house, where there were about a score of animals. So these people were not very poor after all.

Having regaled ourselves with new bread and fresh sweet milk, we set out on our return journey. We had come by the highway, and we returned by the shorter paths over the spurs of the mountain. The sun was low in the west, and the view of Pelmo this side of Cortina, and of Duranno, Pala di Lau, Cridola, and the whole range of Dolomite peaks in the *Val d'Ampezzo*, all bathed in the glow of sunset, with a blue haze creeping up their sides, was exquisite. From the edge of a cliff directly above Perarolo we looked down upon the village with all its broad waters, dams, sluices, basins, quays, bulwarks, and bridges, and realised, as we had not before done, how appropriate was its name, *Porto della Laguna*. A pleasant descent through a pine wood, and then by a steep, winding path on the hill-face above Perarolo, which, as it neared the houses and passed down among them, becoming a series of stone stairs, brought us quickly to our starting-point.

Caraldo

Caraldo is reached by a well-kept path of easy ascent, which, after crossing the bridge, and passing by Zordi, mounts through a pine wood on the left bank of the Piave,

and then through grass meadows between lilac hedges. We had seen Caralto a year before, when it wore an old-world aspect, as its fifty or sixty houses seemed to have taken on the colours of the hills in the midst of which it lay cradled, with no sign of industry and hardly any sign of life. But to-day busy workmen were about, and there was the sound of hammer and axe, and the hum of activity. New houses were rising on the sites of old ones. What had happened? One of those disastrous fires that occasionally break out had reduced the old place to a heap of blackened ruins. The houses here, as throughout all these mountains, are dwelling-places, stables, granaries, and hay-lofts all in one. The family and cattle are below, the winter's food for man and beast is stored above. It was mid-day, and the men were at the saw-mills, and the women and girls in the mountains. There were only old people and little children in the village. Some of the latter were playing with matches in a hay-loft and set the place on fire. Soon the house was in flames. A strong breeze was blowing, and carried the fire from house to house. The old people and young children could do nothing. They left cattle, clothes, furniture, to their fate and fled. Everything was destroyed. The smoke and flames of the burning village were seen far and wide throughout the country. Fire-engines from Pieve di Cadore and from more distant villages were hurried to the spot, and by their aid the fire was cut off and some houses saved. But the peasants returned from their labours only to find most of their homes heaps of blackened ruins. As these villagers have little or no money, and their winter's supplies of food had perished, they were absolutely destitute. Their immediate wants were met by their neighbours. The poor people told us gratefully how he who had two coats, and she who had two dresses, gave away one. The newspapers in Venetia opened subscription lists, Queen Margherita heading the lists with 3000 fr., and the Government adding to that other 2500 fr., and with the amount thus realised Caralto was rising from its ashes.

I may here say that the Sovereigns of Italy endear themselves much to their subjects by their ready sympathy and open-handed generosity. There is never a case of distress, caused by cholera, earthquake, flood, or fire, in any part of the kingdom but King Humbert is prompt with personal help and succour. The generosity of the Queen is less known, but I believe it is equally great. An old woman in Caralto showed us with pride two letters that bore the seal of the Royal House. They were both from Queen Margherita. The poor woman had acted as a guide to her when she was sojourning at Perarolo, and had conducted her to the summits of several of the mountains around. The Queen learned that she had a blind boy, and generously took him to Rome, and maintained him for seven years in a school at her own expense. The first letter concerned this child. The second letter expressed her sympathy with this woman on the death of her husband, and enclosed her some money.

Formerly the Italians depended on the Church as the almoner of the nation, and the clergy, its agents, were separated from the people, and the people from each other. Now the people are learning to take an interest in each other, and to relieve directly each other's needs, and this new *régime* is binding all, in palace or cottage, king, nobles, and commons, in mutual sympathy and dependence.

CHAPTER VI

PERAROLO TO PIEVE DI CADORE

Tai—Pieve

(Distance 5 miles; ascent of road 1204 feet. Postal Diligence leaves daily at 2.30 P.M. and 4 A.M., arriving at Pieve di Cadore at 4.5 P.M. and 5.35 A.M.; fare 1 fr. Private carriage with one horse 4 fr., with two horses 6 fr.

Hotels at Pieve—*Progresso* (over 100 beds), *Angelo, Sole, Tiziano.*)

THERE is always an enjoyable bustle and excitement in getting off from a village inn. Everybody assists at the operation, and takes a kindly interest in it. The inmates of the hotel, from landlord and landlady to stable-boy, are at the door, and half the village manages to see the start. It was thus, as, in the cool of an August afternoon, we left the *Albergo Kofler* at Perarolo for Pieve di Cadore, famous for many things, but chiefly as being the birthplace of the great Titian. This town, the capital of the province of Cadore, is distant but five miles from Perarolo, so the journey we had before us was but a short one. Still it was full of interest.

In the first place, as Pieve di Cadore lies fully twelve hundred feet above Perarolo, and as we gained almost half that altitude before we had gone much more than half-a-mile, as the crow flies, from our starting-point, the road itself, as well as the views it afforded, deserves to be noted. It runs zig-zag up the steep slopes and along the face of the precipitous cliffs of Monte Zucco. The first double turn of the road brought us back to Perarolo, but 400 feet above it, on the top of what is called the *Col delle Forche*, from

which point giant trees from the forest of *S. Marco*, destined to become masts for the vessels of the Venetian fleet, used to be lowered with ropes into the river. From here, too, we got a splendid view of the great Piave Valley, up which we had come, and to which we were soon to say good-bye, and also an interesting bird's eye view of the *Porto della Laguna*. Turning away once more from Perarolo, the road mounts steadily upward, supported on retaining walls and arches, under overhanging cliffs, when the village of Caralto, rising from its ashes in its green vale across the river, comes in sight. Above the slopes of Monte Zucco the road becomes a cutting in the face of the cliffs. Here we stopped to read an inscription cut in a stone set into the rock—not an easy thing to do, as stone and rock were white and dazzling in the rays of the afternoon sun. It was to the effect that Francis I. of Austria, Emperor and King, had made the road to unite his Italian and German territories, and that it was opened for traffic in 1830. The old Roman village of *Sacco*, with its eight families all bearing the same name, now came in sight far below us. A tablet with a small cross over it set in the cliff marked the spot where "*Bortolo de Luca, Pasca di Borga, d'anni 29, qui colpito dal carro moriva li 4 aprile 1861, compianto da tutti I fratelli doloriti posero.*" As we penetrated further into the mountains such memorial stones to persons killed by falling rocks, by cart accidents, and by fatalities of that kind, became lamentably frequent.

Higher and higher our road now mounts, its rocky foundations becoming a precipice more and more profound, until at the point where it leaves this side of the hill to cross the eastern slopes there is a sheer descent of 600 feet to the Piave. At the turn of the road, where a large crucifix has been placed, its protecting wall abuts against a great rock, and at the angle where they meet there is a break from which a wonderful sight is obtained.

Reclining for safety on the rock itself and peering over into the abyss, one sees immediately below a precipitous cliff, on the face of which here and there a straggling bush

or pine-tree has obtained a precarious footing, below that a wild slope covered with trees, among which boulders, that have fallen from the heights above, showed their huge gray masses ; and below all the gorge of the Piave almost filled up with timber, save at its furthest end, where the famous *cidolo* spans it, beneath which the logs shoot to the mills, aided and guided by the men with their long poles, who seem like black specks in the distant depth.

Our road now turned northward across the eastern slopes of Monte Zucco, through lovely pine-woods and open green glades with clumps of trees here and there. At such grassy spots men and women, chiefly women, were to be seen with glittering scythes and wooden-toothed rakes and pitchforks, busily engaged cutting down and securing their fragrant harvest. By the road-side were little girls herding their great gray cows, whose wooden collars were hung with tinkling bells. Passing the mouth of the green valley up which we had gone to Damos we came next to a humble inn, with a big road-shelter. This is a shed, open at both ends, under which one can drive when overtaken by a sudden storm. We did not require its hospitality to-day, but more than once we have been glad to see its sheltering roof. Near it we passed a woman with her daughter by the way-side begging. The coachman said they were *molto povera*, so we gave them a trifle. When we had gone on a little way we heard a scream, and looked back to see the daughter fallen down in an epileptic fit. We wanted to turn to render help, but the coachman said, "The mother knows what to do. It is a common occurrence. It happens almost every day."

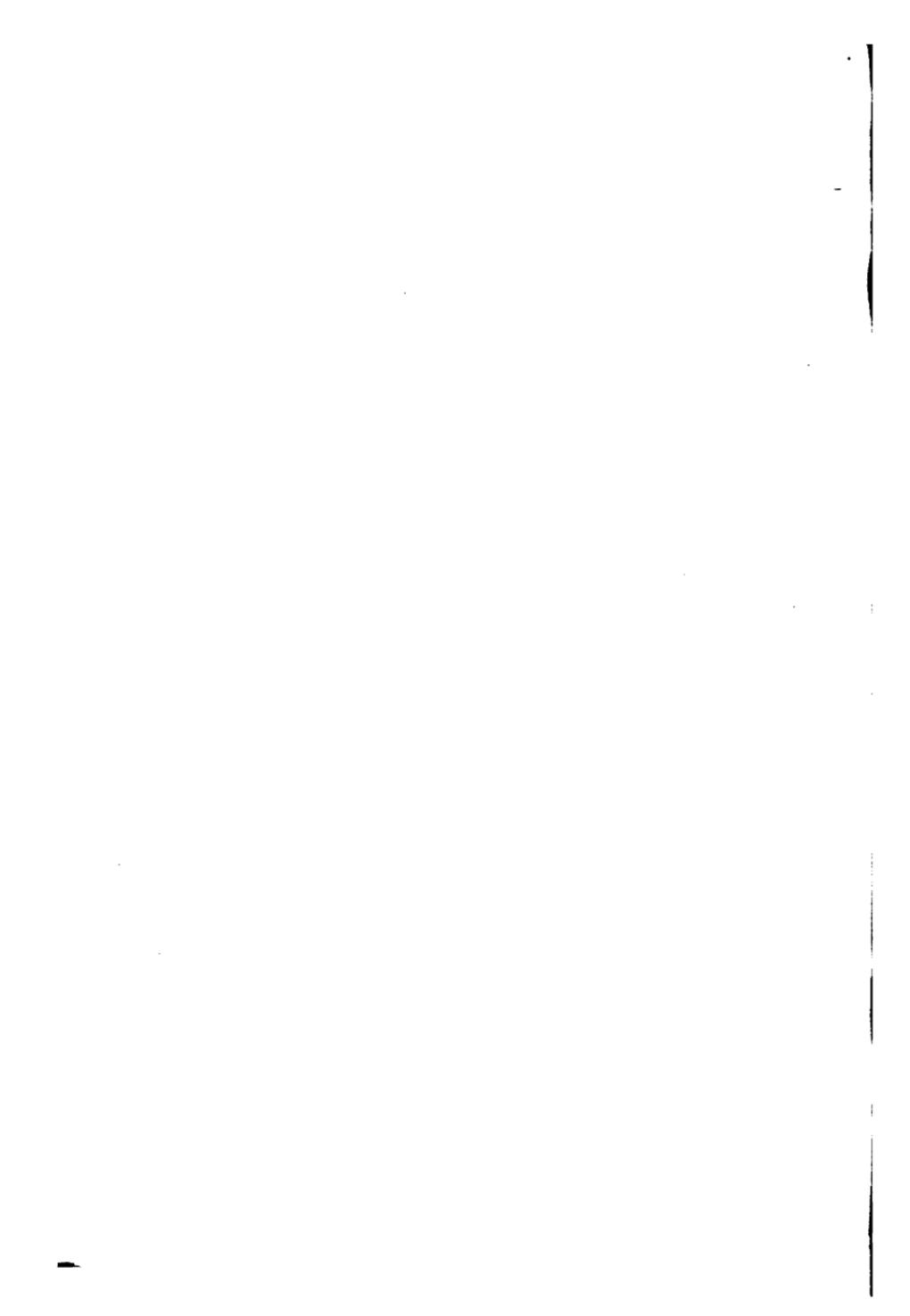
From this point we got our last view for the present of the Piave as it entered the rocky gorge, at the other end of which was the *cidolo*. It was more than ever a river, not of water, but of timber. Where its course was straight a faint glimmer of water could be descried among the thousands of tree-trunks that were piled up on either hand, but where it twisted and turned nothing was to be seen but heaps of logs extending from bank to bank.

To face p. 80.

TAI DI CADORE.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calalzo.)





Now new landscapes and new peaks came in sight on every hand—Tudaio, Cridola, Pala di Lau, with a speck of snow whiter than the clouds above, and the great chain of Marmarole, that we had got a glimpse of before as we came up the Piave Valley between Macchietto and Peron, while in the centre of all, dominating from the twin tops of its isolated hill the whole country round, rose the two forts of Pieve di Cadore.

As we advanced the country became more open, and the prospect extended on all sides. The peaks of the mountains away eastward in Auronzo, beyond the borders of Cadore, now loomed up; their noble summits, rising above the mantling blue of evening that was gathering round their breasts, stood out clear in the rosy light of the setting sun. Another turn in the road brought Antelao, the King of Cadore, again into sight to the north-west of us. We were now in the midst of a giant amphitheatre walled around by those great mountains, the castle hill in the midst now seen to be guarding under its sheltering wings the town of Pieve on its northern, and the village of Sottocastello (under the castle) on its southern slopes.

An hexagonal chapel by the roadside pointed out to us a footpath that, passing by a picturesque farm-house, led down to a second one in a field some distance off. This latter is called the *Valcaldo Chapel*. It marks the spot where in 1540, it is said, a yoke of oxen ploughing turned up in the soil a box that was found to contain a miraculous crucifix, which is preserved in a church that we shall pass before entering Pieve. The chapel itself is decorated with a roughly-painted fresco showing an outline of the village from the spot, with the castle in the foreground. An old tower appears in the fresco near the entrance to the village, part of which still stands attached to the *Palazzo Palatini*, in which bells were hung which were rung to call the peasants to and from their work.

Tai

(Hotels—*Hôtel Cadore* or *Pensione Inglese*, and *Albergo Venezia*.)

We now reached Tai. When we first knew this place some years ago it was a good specimen of an old Cadore village. Its houses, like those we had seen by the bank of the Piave at Perarolo, were of wood with stone foundations, and having their fronts loaded by lines of deep wooden balconies, and their roofs 'slated' with wood. Some of these still exist, but the village is fast assuming a modern appearance. One cannot quarrel with this from an economic point of view, however much it is to be regretted from the side of the artistic and the picturesque. The new houses are more comfortable, and they have fireplaces and chimneys, so that the smoke has no longer to find its own exit by doors and windows after filling the whole house. The new houses are built by American dollars. A young woman who was resting against a wall, with a rake in her hand and a big bundle of hay on her back, seeing us examining the Tai houses, said: "*Adesso che gli uomini vanno a spasso in America il paese si rialza*" (Now that the men go a walk to America the village is reviving). She told us how quite a number of young men had gone from Tai to the New World, and how all had made money, and had come home to buy bits of property, and build themselves new houses. Her own husband was in America and had been successful, and was shortly returning to Tai. The old inn has been transformed into a modern hotel, and a new *albergo* has been opened. The place is fast becoming a favourite summer resort for Italians from the plains of Venetia. One or two professors from the universities of Padua and Bologna were rusticating here.

The church, with the old disused village graveyard around it, is pleasantly situated. The tombstones are mostly large flat ones lying on the ground. Only the name on one did we recognise, that of Di Poli, a painter.

In the church are three pictures by Cesare Vecellio, Titian's cousin. One is an altar-piece representing the Madonna, with Bishop Candido at her right hand, holding a palm branch, and St. Oswald, King of Northumbria, at her left, with his crown and sceptre. Cesare has painted himself as the bishop. The other two pictures are of St. Maurice and St. Apollonia. The former was general of the Theban legion of the Roman army, which was composed of Christians, and he is here represented in his military dress with a sword. Refusing to celebrate heathen rites, he was martyred with his men by the Emperor Maximin in 286 at St. Maurice. The latter suffered martyrdom at Alexandria in 250. In this picture she stands with a pair of pincers in her hand holding a tooth, which has reference to the fact that before she was burnt she was bound to a pillar and her teeth were pulled out one by one, to force her to recant. The whole three pictures are signed either "Cæs.V.F.", or simply "C.V.F." (Cesare Vecellio fecit), and the last-mentioned picture has the date 1582. When speaking of the village of Mel, which we passed on our way to Belluno, I said that Antonio Rossi, the famous painter of that place, was born at Tai. This then was his native village; and if Ticozzi is right in his supposition that it was Rossi's pictures that first inspired the boy Titian to become a painter, these pictures must have been in this neighbourhood, within hail of Titian's birthplace. We do not know that any work of his ever existed at Tai, although doubtless there must have been something, but there were pictures of his both at Pieve and at Valle. Those at Pieve perished in a fire in 1754, and the one at Valle was unwittingly sold a few years ago, so that unfortunately nothing now remains of his in Cadore. At a *borgo* of Tai, called *Vissù*, we met the parish priest. He told us that the name *Vissù* was used in the time of Attila to signify a wood or forest. "Andare a *Vissù*," is used for "going to the forest." This priest, like the majority of those who have country parishes, is an inveterate bird-

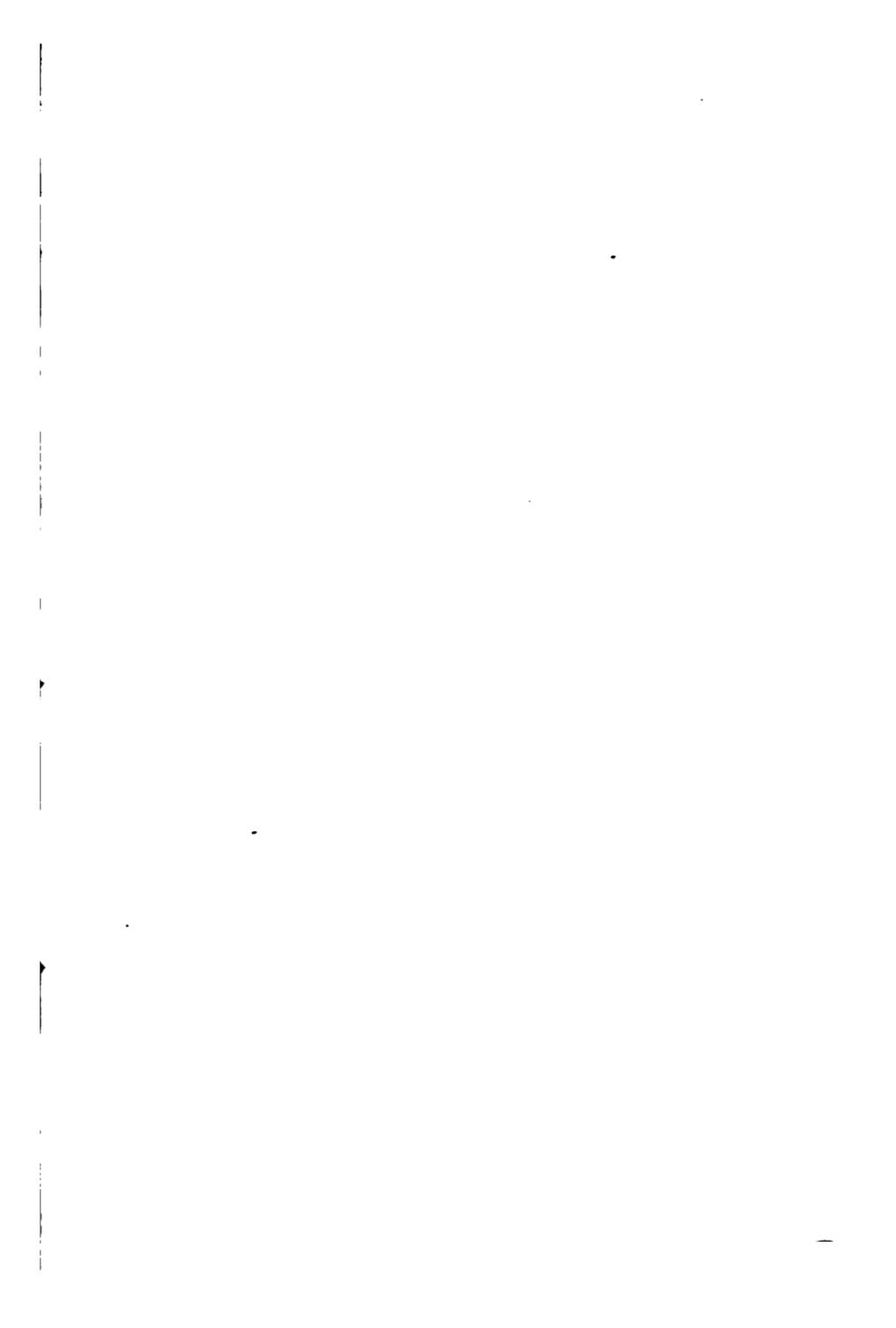
catcher. At some little distance from Vissù, where we met him, there are lovely hedges of lilac, called here *siccamenti*, and in one of these he had made a seat for himself where he could sit concealed. Opposite, on a rising grassy knoll, he had erected rude imitation trees, consisting of poles with arms stuck into them, to which pine-tree twigs were attached. These were smeared over with *vischio*, a kind of birdlime, made, I am sorry to say, from the mistletoe berry. Smaller erections, like bushes, stood near, and to the tops of these were attached cages with decoy singing-birds in them. Other cages with birds were set here and there on the green knoll. The sun was shining brightly, and the birds in their cages were answering one another sweetly in song, little knowing that they were alluring their free companions to destruction. When a bird alighted on one of the small twigs, its weight and its struggles to free its feet from the birdlime in which they were taken, brought both twig and it to the ground, when the priest came out of his lilac bower, like a spider, and secured it. In this way he was only too successful in catching poor migratory birds that at this season of the year pass over Cadore in their journeys northward. His bower was strewed with feathers, for in the intervals of catching the birds he employed himself in preparing those caught for his table. His choir-boy sat beside him reading his offices.

Although lower in position than Pieve, Tai is very conveniently situated either for walking or climbing excursions. As it is here, too, that the road to Cortina and Toblach turns westward, many travellers, especially those who are only passing through, prefer to stop to change their horses, or to pass a night, rather than go on to Pieve, which is about a mile eastward on the Auronzo road, and can be easily reached on foot. For such travellers, and even for those who may wish to make a longer stay at Tai, there is a capital inn, called *Hôtel Cadore*, recently restored and enlarged. The views from its windows are both extensive and beautiful. We once passed a few days here, and can

never forget the glorious morning vision we enjoyed looking westward. The great mountain of Civetta that bounded the view in that direction was transfigured, morning by morning, by the rising sun. Its bare white peaks, catching the earliest rays, glowed in the softest, purest, most delicate pink and white colouring, rendered the more striking by the green slopes below and on either side all in shade. The evening lights on these same peaks are also beautiful, though not equal to the morning ones. One of the chief buildings at Tai is the "*Scuola Coletti*,"—we have already met the name in connection with the saw-mills of Candidopoli, which were left to Cadore for educational purposes. At Venice there is a Reformatory School for boys, also founded by a Coletti, and I had lately read of the death of a Luigi Colletti at Treviso, who had done much good. We now learned that all these Colettis were of one old Tai family, whose genealogy goes back to 1407, and whose members have been noted for a spirit of philanthropy from that time till now.

Proceeding on our journey we passed an inn, recognisable by the tuft of shavings which hung above its door by way of representing a bush. In Venice such mechanical shrubs are often seen, but I did not expect to find them here. We next passed a large building used as barracks for soldiers, for in summer the *Alpinisti* are always sent to Pieve for their mountain manœuvres. We then came to the church that contains the crucifix turned up by the ploughshare in the field of Valcaldo. It is called the *Cappella del Santissimo Crocifisso*. A rudely painted fresco above the porch represents the scene of the finding of the crucifix. Peasants are seen in the field reverently lifting it out of its box, while the oxen in the plough that hit against it, are on their knees before it. This church was built to receive it, and it is still preserved on the high altar. On entering the church, we found votive pictures hanging on the walls, which represented the cures said to have been miraculously performed by this same crucifix. Here that of a man run over by a bullock-cart, there that of a man falling from a ladder, and

yonder a patient sick in bed. Models of crushed hands and broken legs also added to the ghastly wall ornamentation. The roof of the apse was decorated with frescoes, but they were in bad style, and in a bad state of preservation. Representations of the four evangelists were the most easily distinguishable. There were a few pictures said to be by Cesare Vecellio, and an altar-piece of the Bible, sealed with seven seals, and a lamb lying on the top of it. Attached to the little church there is a good stone *campanile*, with a sun-dial and an inscription. By the side of it is a short column, hollowed out and fashioned into that indispensable article of furniture of the church, a money-box. Again we made a start, when, passing a few scattered houses, then a fountain, around which a group of women were chatting whilst filling their bright copper vessels, and then the parish church, whose foundation is said to go back to the sixth century, we at last completed the steep ascent, and rattled into the little *Piazza* of Pieve di Cadore.



To face p. 87.

TITIAN'S MONUMENT, PIEVE DI CADORE.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calalzo.)



CHAPTER VII

PIEVE DI CADORE

(Capital of the old Republic of Cadore, population 800 ; distance from Venice 100½ miles ; height above sea-level 2990 feet. Nearest railway stations—Belluno, 28 miles ; Vittorio, 41½ miles ; Carnia (on the Pontebba line), 48 miles ; Toblach, 38½ miles. Diligences carrying mails, passengers, and luggage start for and arrive from all these stations twice daily. Post and telegraph offices. Good doctor and chemist.

Hotels—*Al Progresso* (over 100 beds), *Al Angelo*, and *Sole* ; rooms 2 fr. ; pension from 8 fr. per day. Private apartments to be had.)

THE word *Pieve*, derived, in all likelihood, from *plebs* (the people), generally marks a place of popular assembly, and as there are several *Pieves* in Italy, it is necessary, in order to distinguish them, to add the names of their districts or provinces. Thus our mountain one, which we have just reached, the most famous of them all, is *Pieve di Cadore*. The name *Cadore* is thought to be derived from that of the Caturigi, who early settled here, fleeing from a Gallican invasion of their country.

In the whirligig of time the seat of government of the old Republic of Cadore has become but the chief town of a district of a province (Belluno) of the kingdom of Italy. Still nothing deprives it of its local, family, and historic interests. It is a compact little place of about seven hundred inhabitants, on a commanding, yet not exposed, position on the saddle of a hill, well guarded by the guns of the crouching modern fortress of *Monte Rico*, that takes the place of the towers and keeps and battlemented walls

of the old castle. It has, like most of the Cadore villages, a substantial, well-to-do look.

Its houses are large square stone dwellings, with broad overhanging eaves. They are called *palazzi* (palaces), which term is applied in Italy to any large self-contained building. Roughly speaking, the village is triangular in form, and the space enclosed, which serves as a village market square, is called the *Piazza Tiziano*, so named after the great painter who was born here in 1477. As everything and everybody in the place seems to have a connection with Titian, it is well to begin with him in our examination of the little town. Looking round the *Piazza* one sees the name Vecellio everywhere. The chief grocer is a Vecellio, so is the baker, the butcher, and the cobbler. The papers nailed to the Town-Hall door are signed "Vecellio, *Sindaco*." Here is a *Tipografia Tiziano*, there an *Albergo Tiziano*, and yonder a *caffè and reading-room*, also called *Tiziano*. The striking resemblance of the late handsome landlord of the *albergo* to his illustrious forebear struck all who saw him.

In the centre of the *Piazza* is Titian's monument, a large bronze statue, set on a lofty stone pedestal, representing him with brush and palette in hand in the act of painting. Affixed to the pedestal are bronze medallions with the names of his chief works, and the arms of Venice and Cadore. The monument was only erected in 1880, and is the work of his fellow-countryman, Antonio dal Zotto, who modelled it; the brothers De Poli, the famous bell-makers of Ceneda, who cast it; and of Giuseppe Ghedina of Cortina, who designed the pedestal. From the foot of the monument can be seen a granite tablet, let into the wall of an old house that abuts on the *Piazza del Arsenale* (where an Arsenal, supplementary to the Venice one, used to be) at the top of the Sottocastello road, on which are the words, "*Cadore segna agli ospiti questa casa dove naque e crebbe Tiziano*" (Cadore points out to its guests this house where Titian was born and grew up.) The house is a very modest one, and leans on others like itself for support, and is in a

rather dilapidated condition. It is two stories in height, and is tenanted by a seller of newspapers, and a barber. Two rooms are shown on the upper floor, one as that in which he was born, and the other as his studio; for although he was taken to Venice by his father between his ninth and eleventh years, to begin his painting apprenticeship under Zuccato and Bellini, and though he spent his long life there, he yet returned to his birthplace nearly every summer for a lengthened holiday. A large house that closes in the south end of this little *Piazza del Arsenale* is called *Palazzo Sampieri*, and belonged to Titian's grandfather, who seems to have been a character, and was known by the nickname of "the Count." Its façade was covered with frescoes and some of them are still visible, though much faded, under the eaves, but are of little value, as the one gem was removed, and placed inside the house for safety long years ago. It is a fresco of a Madonna and Child, before whom kneels a boy presenting an offering. It is by Titian, and is said to have been painted with natural dyes, derived from flowers, just before he set out the first time for Venice. The boy is thought to represent Titian himself beseeching Divine guidance and protection at the commencement of his life's work. Mr. Ruskin says that of all Titian's religious pictures this is perhaps the only one he painted religiously. In this house we could not but take notice of the fine old carved hall chairs and benches with the family *stemma*, or crest, upon them.

At the southern end of the *Piazza* is the *Palazzo Solero*, the largest house in Pieve, which is also intimately associated with Titian. It belonged to a family, Jacobbi, the head of which married Titian's only niece. The present proprietor, Signor Giuseppe Solero, very courteously showed us over the house. The lobby at once arrested us, for it contained, besides many fine old carved chairs and benches, such as we had seen in the *Palazzo Sampieri*, equally beautifully carved tables, a quantity of old armour, and the antlered heads of chamois shot in the neighbouring mountains long years ago. In the library he showed us

several old manuscripts very beautifully written, bound in boards of wood, that, strangely enough, bore, not the marks of the bookbinder, but of the wood-merchant; some fifteenth and sixteenth century books; some curious early maps for navigators; and many documents from which dangled the seals of kings and emperors, colleges and corporations, conferring privileges on Titian. One of these was a large parchment about three feet square, carefully written and brilliantly illuminated. It began:—"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," and ended with "*Laus Deo optimo maximo*," and it was signed and sealed by Charles the Fifth, Roman Emperor and King of Germany, Spain, Sicily, and Jerusalem, and countersigned by Titian. One of the chief privileges this document conferred upon Titian, in conformity with the perverted notions of the time, was to legitimise illegitimate children. Among the many pictures that covered the walls were two by Titian—one the "Descent of the Holy Spirit," and the other a portrait of himself. His right hand, which holds a brush, is adorned with the usual thumb-ring of the period. A quantity of gold and silver silk-embroidered garments were shown us, such as were burned in Venice fifty years ago—literally by the ton—in order to extract the precious metals. There were waistcoats with curious back pockets attached to them, which hang down like the swallow-tails of a coat. Out of fine old carved wooden chests there came Flanders linen, Venetian lace, and articles of silk, all of a great value. Among the last was a coverlet said to be 700 years old. When the road to Perarolo was opened by the Emperor Francis in 1832, he and the Empress were lodged in this palace, and the old housekeeper, who had been brought up in it from a girl, and was, as Don Giuseppe, a retired priest who was with us, said, *come la padrona* (like the mistress), put in her word here, saying, "I can remember how the Empress admired these rooms as she sat in that chair, knitting stockings for the poor." She referred to the fact that the two large rooms we were now in were, until lately, covered with embossed leather, very old and very beautiful.



TITIAN'S HOUSE, PIEVE DI CADORE.

To face p. 90.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Cadore.)

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The present proprietor's uncle sold the leather off the walls to an Englishman for some 20,000 fr. (L800), who sold it to an American for 40,000 fr. (L1,600), who resold it at a higher figure, and the last rumour that reached Pieve was that it had ultimately been bought in New York for 90,000 fr. (L3,600). Many other things were shown us, but I can only mention a set of antique coffee-cups used when coffee was first introduced into the country, a large majolica dish, adorned with the Judgment of Solomon, said to be 500 years old, and a number of three-legged bronze pots (bronzini) used for cooking, with the coats of arms of the family on them, made from metal dug out of the mountains long centuries ago, which shone bright as gold after generations of use.

The interest of the *Duomo* of Pieve, like that of many a church in Cadore, centres around Titian. The venerable parish priest, Monsignor Da Via, kindly showed us its treasures. His name, as is often the case in Cadore, suggests its origin. *Da Via* means "by the wayside," which describes the position of his paternal home. Thus there are families called *Da Rù*, "by the river"; *Da Prato*, "by the meadow"; *Da Corte*, "by the court"; and *Da Giau*, "by the rocky slope." There were eight painters in the Vecellio family, and five of them have pictures in this church. There are two by Titian himself. One of them represents the Madonna with St. Sebastian and St. Roch, a picture that suggests, therefore, a time of plague. It was painted in 1496 for the Genova family, well-to-do members of which are still in Pieve. The other is a group of family portraits arranged as the Madonna and saints. Titian's daughter Lavinia is in the centre as the Madonna; his brother Francesco is at her right hand in red as St. Andrew; his cousin's son, Marco, is at her left as Bishop Tiziano of Ceneda (Titian's patron saint, after whom he was named); and, lastly, the painter himself, in black robe and cap, somewhat behind, as *chierica*, holding the bishop's crosier. It was painted in 1527, Titian being then fifty years of age. I noticed that the portrait of Lavinia had

been cut out and replaced. Monsignor Da Via explained that it had been stolen, but like many another famous portrait it was of no use to its possessor, for he could not show it for fear of detection, and so it was restored. The picture is an altar-piece in a little side chapel in which is the burial vault of the Vecellio family, and the place where Titian hoped to rest. But as is well known, his wish was not gratified. In 1576, when he was ninety-nine years old, the dreaded plague visited Venice. He tried to escape to his mountain home, but he was too late. A cordon of soldiers round the lagoons of the stricken city forbade all escape. Titian returned to his house, whose windows looked out on the Dolomites he was never more to visit. His servants took the plague and died, then he was seized. As he lay alone in suffering, looters entered his studio, carried off his valuables and sacked his dwelling; and thus he died deserted and plundered, and no one knows even what became of his body. A splendid monument was erected in the present century in the church of the Frari to his memory, but his remains are supposed to have been thrown, with those of thousands of others who then died, into a common trench. Cesare Vecellio has six pictures in the church, one—"The Last Supper"—over the high altar. There is also a small "Deposition," by Palma Giovanni, and a "Risen Christ," by Palma Vecchio, painted on the wooden door of a small tabernacle behind the high altar.

Close by the church is a museum, founded by Monsignor Da Via, and to it we next went. It, too, has relics of Titian, though it contains things of wider interest beside. The picture of the old woman sitting at the foot of the stairs selling apples in Titian's famous picture of the "Presentation in the Temple," in the Academy, Venice, is thought to be a portrait of his mother. There are two more complimentary ones here, in which she is represented spinning and worshipping—at work and prayer. The museum contains engravings of many of his works, and a portfolio of letters from him to friends, and a few to him from celebrated personages. His letters were quite legible, for they

were carefully written, as became that age of leisure, and not scrawled over as in these days of hurry. Many of them throw light on his character, and on local events. We learn from them, for example, that when times of scarcity fell on Pieve he was accustomed to send money for food or for seed; but that he liked to be repaid when the sun of prosperity again shone on Cadore. In more than one letter he pressed the municipality to pay its debt to him, due, he said, too long. An elaborate patent of nobility bearing the signature and seal of Charles V. creating Titian a count, is in this museum; but these democratic Cadorini, who themselves applied the title in joke to his grandfather, were not at all eager to apply it in earnest to the grandson. As we have already seen, a law was afterwards passed forbidding any subject to accept a title of nobility.

Many of the relics of the early inhabitants of the Dolomites, to which I have already referred, were found in Pieve and its neighbourhood, and are here preserved. Amongst these are swords, lance and axe-heads, military metal collars and belts, earrings, bracelets, fibulæ, and beads of amber, coloured glass, coins, and medals. One of these latter has the quaint and wise inscription—

*Facio voto a Dio ed a Maria
Di non prestar soldi, ne far piggiaria*

(I have vowed to God and to Mary neither to lend money, nor to become surety). There is also a handsome spiral Etruscan finger-ring. Besides these things there are terra-cotta and bronze cinerary urns, some of the latter, probably of Greek origin, being very beautiful in form and ornamentation. There are also two stones engraved in Euganean, or, as some think, Etruscan characters. One is 31 inches by 9½, and the other 33½ by 16½. The former has a single line of inscription that reads from right to left, and then returns upon itself. The latter has two lines both of which read from left to right, but curiously enough the lower line was written first, and then the stone was turned upside down and the upper line written, so that

the letters of the one line are upside down as regards the other.

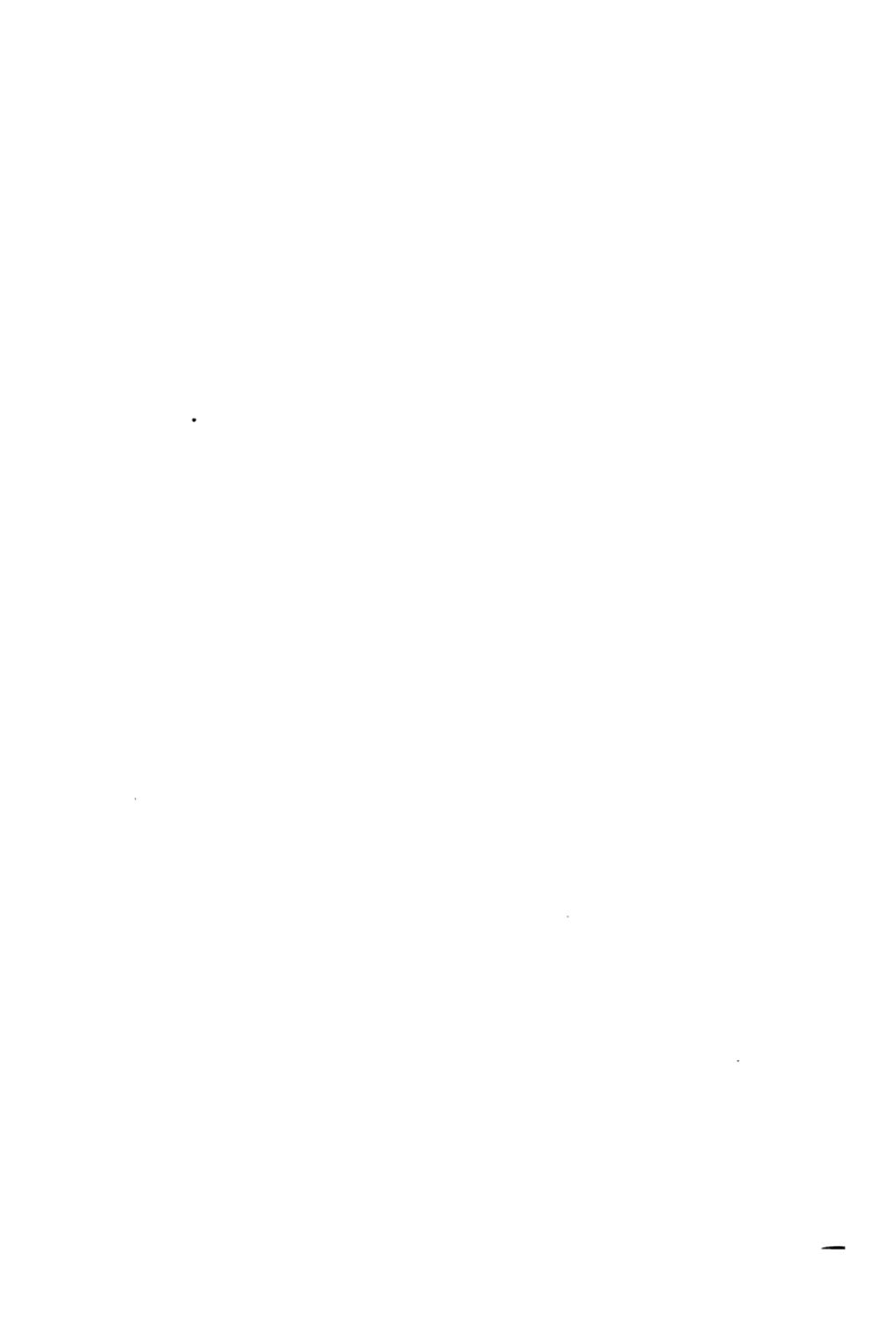
A Roman stone found at the neighbouring village of Valle disclosed the interesting fact that in Cicero's time Pieve had a public school. In this connection I may say that these mountaineers always set a high value on education, for about 1320 Pieve had a school for the higher branches of learning, and a theological college; and a couple of centuries or so later it had "mutual improvement societies," of one of which a beautifully written and illuminated minute-book remains. A modern article, gifted lately to the museum, deserves to be mentioned. It is a most ingenious machine which shows the working of the Copernican system. It is the work of one Bortolomeo Toffoli, who was born in the neighbouring village of Calalzo in 1755. He lived till he was seventy-nine years of age, dying in his native village in 1834, and his life was a most strange one. The first half of it was like "the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day," the second half was a starless night. He was a brilliant boy, inventing mechanical toys in his father's carpenter's shop, and a model mill that he used to set working in the stream by his door, for the amusement of his playmates. By-and-by he distinguished himself at Padua, first as a student in physics, astronomy, and anatomy, and then as a master in these subjects. His mechanical genius showed itself in the invention of many useful machines for civil engineering, and for various industries. The Venetian Republic commissioned him to devise a machine to keep the Agordo mines clear of water, which he succeeded in doing. Then the Republic appointed him *Soprintendente alle Arti* (Superintendent of Trades) in Venice, in which capacity, by discoveries and inventions, he materially advanced many branches of industry, and technical education in general. He was elected a member of various learned societies throughout Italy and in Berlin, Paris, and London. The year in which he was called to Venice was 1792. He was then thirty-seven years of age. The very next year

his mind gave way, and he was taken to the asylum for the insane on the island of St. Servolo in the lagoons, between Venice and the Lido. There he remained forty-one long years. At last, in 1834, his reason returned, and he was given his liberty. But from the day he entered St. Servolo in 1793, till his leaving it in 1834, what changes had taken place of which he knew nothing! A new century had come in, had run a third of its course, and had changed the face of Europe. The brilliant career of Napoleon, with its passing evils, and its lasting benefits, was a matter of history. The Venetian Republic was a thing of the past, so also was French sovereignty in Venice. Austria was in power, but Charles Albert, the father of Victor Emanuel, sat on the throne of Piedmont, and the idea of "Young Italy" was being realised under the genius of Mazzini, Garibaldi, and Cavour. Poor Bartolomeo Toffoli found himself in a new world. He sought his native mountains, his native village, his native home. He called for this machine that exhibits the working of the Copernican system. He put it once more in order, and then, as if he had nothing more to live for, he passed quietly away.

Leaving the Museum, and returning to the *Piazza*, we came to the old *Town-Hall*, which with its outside double staircase and a tower at its west gable, is worthy of a visit. The office of the syndic and the court-room have beautiful carved wood ceilings. That of the former is oval shaped, and has written round it in golden letters, "*La Patria unisce insieme le sue più care memorie, 1864*" (Our native land unites together its dearest memories). These words direct the reader's attention to figures carved in wood, set in niches in the cornice under the ceiling round the room. They are thirty-three in number, and include the most celebrated of Cadore's statesmen, lawyers, soldiers, poets, painters, sculptors, and scientists, from the twelfth century to the present time. The first is that of Marchese Folco, who appointed Guecello da Camino, the founder of the Titian family, keeper of the

Castle of Pieve. As there are a number of niches not yet filled up, Cadore seems to say that great men will never be wanting to her.

One of the most memorable associations in connection with the Town-Hall of Pieve belongs to 1420, when in the month of July of that year the Counsellors of the little Republic met, in order to deliberate to which of the greater powers around them they should offer themselves as allies, in order to preserve their own national independence. The story goes that they were unable to come to a decision. At last, just as John Bright rose in the British House of Commons at a moment of perplexity and said, "To the upright there arises light in the darkness," so his prototype at Cadore rose and said, "We are Christians, we ought to go to the Source of all light for guidance." They accordingly adjourned to the Church of the Holy Spirit at Valle. Returning to Pieve after their service they cried with "one heart and one mind," as if by the impulse of a simultaneous inspiration, "*Eamus ad bonos Venetos*" (Let us go to the good Venetians). The crowds of mountaineers, gathered in the *Piazza* outside, heard the resolution and re-echoed the cry, "*Eamus ad bonos Venetos.*" Four Commissioners were appointed, Nicolo Palatini, Antonio Barnabò, Antonio Piloni, and Bartolommeo Sala. The descendants of the two former are still prominent families in Cadore. These Commissioners were received by the Doge, Tomaso Mocenigo, who accepted in the name of Venice the alliance of Cadore, and confirmed to it all its ancient rights and privileges. So pleased were the Venetians with the mountaineers, who became a strong vanguard on their northern boundary, that they conferred upon them the rights of Venetian citizenship, and thus, when Titian was born in 1477, he was a villager of Pieve, and a citizen of Venice. The honourable alliance between the two Republics lasted, as I have already indicated in the first chapter, till the fall of Venice, under Napoleon in 1797, but the Emperor allowed Cadore to keep her free





PIEVE DI CADORE, WITH THE MOUNTAINS OF MARMAROLE.

To face p. 97.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calalzo.)



constitution ten years longer, only supplanting it by his code in 1807.

Affixed to the foot of the tower of the Town-Hall facing the *Piazza*, so that all may see it, is a monument to the great Cadore leader in the war of independence of 1848-49, Pietro Fortunato Calvi. When the liberties of Venice and Cadore achieved by that war were again crushed by Austria, Calvi escaped in an English ship to Greece, and then made his way back to Turin. Indomitable in his struggle for his country's freedom, he joined Mazzini in the insurrection at Milan in 1853, and had to fly into Switzerland. Unable to sit still in exile and see his land enslaved, he gathered a few companions and crossed the Austrian frontier to arouse once more Cadore. Tracked and captured, he was condemned to death on July 1, 1855. He was but thirty-eight years of age, handsome and full of life and energy, and his life was given him on condition of his asking it from his enemies. He would not stoop to the indignity, and so, three days later, Austrian bullets ended his noble life, as they have done that of many a hero before and since. The monument is of marble, pyramidal in shape. The bust of Calvi is in its centre, and the names of sixteen martyrs for the same cause are inscribed on either side.

Immediately to the south of Pieve rises its old castle hill. It has two summits, that to the west being called *Il Castello*, and that to the eastward *Monte Ricco*. *Il Castello* (the castle), the old eye and heart of Pieve and Cadore, naturally first claimed our thoughts. A pleasant path, winding gradually upward among green slopes and avenues of pine and beech trees, soon brought us to its summit. The ascent we had made from the village was but 300 feet, but on the other side the hill sloped some 1300 feet down into the great Piave Valley, which lay spread out open before us for long miles, the waters of the river glittering in the distance on either hand, though hidden beneath us by overhanging cliffs. On this commanding site tradition says a castle existed before the time of the Romans. In the records of their occupation (100 B.C. to A.D. 400), that

have come down to us in the writings of Polybius, Strabo, and Pliny the Elder, it is spoken of as *Arx Caturigum Cadubrium*. One of the most interesting facts of the Roman times to which I have already alluded is that the soldiers were the first missionaries. About A.D. 63 Nero sent some legions, under Drusus and Tiberius, to subjugate Cadore. As that was the time of St. Paul's imprisonment in Rome, some of them may have been chained to the apostle as his guards in his prison, and got the gospel from his own lips, or at least may have got it in the Praetorium from soldiers who thus received it. By these soldiers Christianity was introduced, which may account to a large extent for the manly courage and independence of the Cadorini during their eventful history. The castle plays an important part in the history of the country during the six hundred years following the Roman occupation, 400 to 1000, when, in successive waves, Goths, Huns, Ostrogoths, Lombards, and Franks, coming from the north, broke on the Dolomites, and poured themselves over the plains of Italy.

From 1000 to 1800, when Cadore was a Republic united first with Aquileia, and then with Venice, we have an accurate account of the sieges, burnings, reparations, enlargements, strengthenings, and rebuildings the castle underwent. There was a secret passage from it into the Piave Valley, and the village of Vigo was freed from taxation in return for engaging to throw in supplies in time of siege. After the Napoleonic invasion the castle disappears from history as a defence, and is referred to only as an interesting ruin, and a quarry for stones for building. Everybody seems, under Austrian rule, to have carried a piece of it away—even the parish priest, in 1814, rebuilt a portion of his church with it. We know it did not displease Austria to see the demolition of Italian fortresses. At last the Italian Government came to its rescue. They in one sense completed its destruction, for they carried off what remained of it, digging up its very foundations, but only to build on its site a modern fortress. In this way the old castle of Pieve has got a fresh lease of

life, and once more keeps watch and ward over the snug little town at its feet, and over the highlands of Cadore spread around.

From the strategic importance of this castle-hill it may readily be supposed that the views it affords are very extensive, and, I need scarcely add, are very fine. Five valleys or passes, nineteen villages, the Piave and the Boite rivers, and several smaller streams, and broad wooded hills and rough mountain-peaks almost without number, are in sight. Looking westward and southward we see the great valley of the Piave up which we have come. Looking westward and northward we see that of the Boite, up which our road runs to Cortina, the most striking feature of it being the two giant mountains that stand one on either side of it in the distance—Antelao, 10,986 feet, the glacier on its northward slopes just showing round its summit like a crystal crown, and Pelmo, 10,692 feet, in form like a great rocky throne. To the north lies the Marmarole, with its jagged line of pinnacles, looking like a steep and inaccessible reef rising from the midst of green, soft, subsidiary hills; while eastward Mount Tudaio looms against the sky, the mountains of Comelico showing over its shoulders.

Returning to Pieve by the eastern side of the castle-hill we came upon a *roccolo*. A *roccolo* is always a lovely place, but it is a place of destruction for all that; indeed, its beauty is a weapon in its destructive armoury. It is an Italian invention for catching birds wholesale, without the exercise of any skill, or the putting forth of any fatigue on the part of the trapper. This one is under the patronage of a saint, and bears the name St. Alipio. A famous one exists in the Vatican gardens for the amusement of the Pope. But though enjoying such exalted patronage, a *roccolo* is an institution that may well be recommended to the attention of the Society for the Protection of Birds. It consists of a large circle of trees planted close together, trained to grow upwards rather than outwards, and trimmed like a hedge. In this one of St. Alipio beech and hornbeam trees stand round in stately order six deep, forming a

beautiful, high, dense, circular wall of green. This is draped on its inner and sometimes also on its outer side, from top to bottom, completely round, with a light but strong and almost invisible wide-meshed net. Over this, in the inside of the circle, is hung a similar one, but of fine meshes. In the centre of the circle there is a grassy knoll with a few shrubs growing on it. Here are set decoy birds in cages. Outside the charmed circle, but close to it, communicating with it and high enough just to overlook it, is a tower usually also well concealed from view by ivy, and trees, and shrubbery. In the topmost story of this, at a little open window, sits the "sportsman," if such a term can be applied to him. He holds a wicker-work fan-shaped article, something like a basket-lid, in his hand. We will suppose it is a lovely summer day. The sun is shining brightly, and the decoy birds in their cages are singing cheerily. Across the hills migratory birds are passing on tired wing for more northerly lands. The quiet secluded green *roccolo* looks a little oasis in the desert, and the singing birds invite them to rest. A whole flight alights on the bushes, when suddenly the watcher in the tower throws from his window his *spauracchio*, as it is called, which skims across the enclosure on a level with the tree-tops. The frightened birds fly to right and left to take refuge in the trees. They strike the fine-meshed net, and carry it through the wider meshes of the outer one and are caught. The fine net becomes a mass of pockets suspended in the wider one, each one of which contains a bird. The number caught depends on the number within the fatal ring. Sometimes all are captured, rarely two in fifty escape.

These *roccoli*, I am sorry to say, are far too numerous in this lovely Dolomite country, and in other parts of Italy. One result is that singing birds are disappearing from the land. Strange as it may seem, there are far more singing birds in Venice than in any area of equal extent in the country, the reason being that they are neither shot nor trapped, but, as the pigeons are left in undisturbed possession

of St. Mark's Square, so are the birds of the many gardens that lie unseen by visitors, behind walls and palaces. Another mischievous result of these *roccoli* is that northern countries are beginning to feel a diminution in the number of birds of passage coming to them, and quite recently Societies for the preservation of birds in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland protested against their destruction in Italy, and sent a petition to Queen Margherita, praying her to use her influence to have it lessened or stopped.

CHAPTER VIII

PIEVE DI CADORE—continued

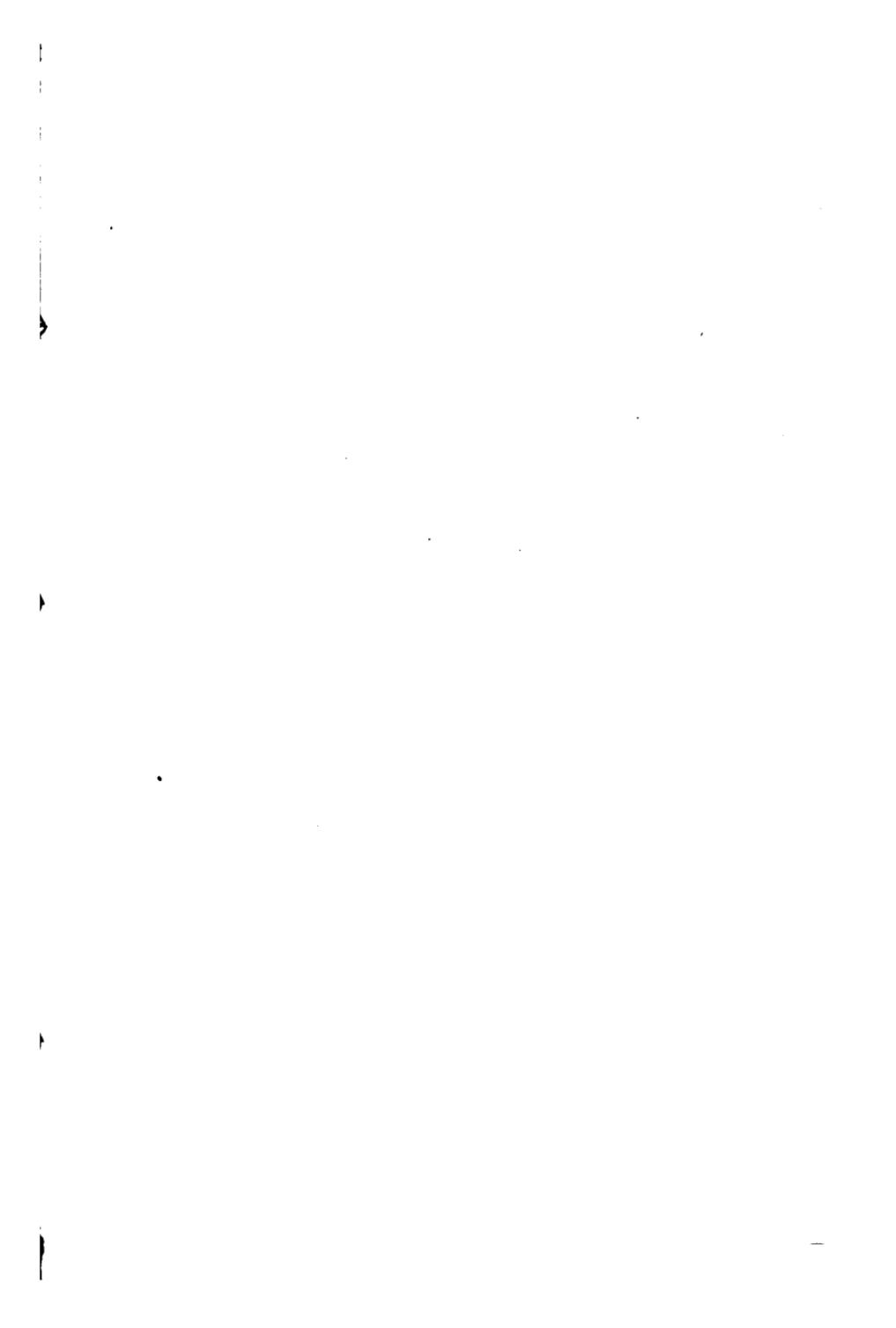
WALKING, RIDING, AND DRIVING EXCURSIONS

Pozzale and Calalzo—Molinà, Grea, and Lagole—Vallesella and Monte Froppa—Sottocastello, the Roman Bridge of Rouza, and the Cascade of Anfella—Mount Vedorechio, its Baite and Malghe—Salagona Chapel—Domegge—Lozzo—Pelos and Lorenzago—Vigo—Laggio—Forest of St. Mark—Gogna—Auronzo—San Stefano

A NUMBER of most enjoyable excursions can be made in all directions around Pieve, some of which may best be done on foot, others on the back of a mule or donkey, and others by diligence or carriage. Tables of the hours and fares of diligences, and prices for carriages are hung up in all the hotels. See also Appendix. I shall now describe a few of these excursions.

Pozzale and Calalzo

One of the first we made on foot was to Pozzale and Calalzo. **Pozzale** is situated on the slope of a hill about a mile and a half to the north of Pieve. A good military road, which winds to the top of the hill of St. Dionysius (7000 feet), passes through it. However, we forsook the road for the grassy slopes, and were rewarded by coming across three large glacier mills or wash-pots—deep circular or oval excavations. On entering Pozzale we found it to





CALALZO.

To face p. 103.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calalzo.)

be a good type of an old Cadore village, consisting entirely of big, blackened, wooden houses with lumbering outside stair-cases and balconies. The name, derived from *pozzo* (a well), would seem to indicate something special about its water supply, for all these villages have an abundance of good water, and have, as a rule, both drinking and washing fountains, but what the speciality was I could not learn. From this village came not a few of the antiquities preserved in the museum of Pieve. The smaller but older of the two Euganean stones was found here, in 1878; also several tombs, containing urns in which were armour, knives, rings, and money. As I have already mentioned, it was from this village that Titian's family came, his forebear, Guecello, removing to Pieve when elected *Podestà* in 1321, two and a half centuries before the painter's birth. The church of Pozzale contains a large picture by Carpaccio, representing the Madonna with four saints—St. Sebastian, St. Roch, a bishop, and a warrior. It is signed *Victor Carpathius Venetus, Pinxit, MDXVIII*, but as it was buried in the ground in 1848–49, to hide it from the Austrians, it is very much damaged. There is also another good picture by an unknown artist, and an old tattered banner that has seen some service. From the church a splendid view is obtained of the valley of the Piave, eastward to the great mountain of Tudaio, and southward across to the peaks of Spè. Pozzale is curiously enough celebrated for a guild of hat-makers. It had a modest beginning in 1854, but now it numbers over forty members who go about all Venetia selling hats, and who meet twice a year in Pozzale, where their families are, to divide their spoils.

At the distance of a mile and a half or so eastward from Pozzale lies Calalzo. Its name indicates its position, the high (*alto*) village. We found it a curious old place, with not a few houses of the Cadore type, but with also many new stone ones, as it was in part destroyed by a fire in 1855. It once possessed its own civil and criminal code. In its archives are many old documents, one a thirteenth-century parchment. In the church are eight pictures, by

Orazio Vecellio, Titian's second son, four scenes from the life of Christ, and four saints. They are painted on both sides of the doors of a reliquary. There is also a carved altar-piece by Brustolon. Calalzo is the native village of poor Bortolomeo Toffoli, whose wonderful piece of mechanism we saw in the Pieve museum; and here is the studio of Davide Riva, whose photographs are famed throughout Cadore. Half-an-hour's walk along green flowery foot-paths, between fields of tall maize, brought us back to Pieve.

Molinà, Grea, and Lagole

Another walk is to the Bridge of the Molinà, and the village of Grea, returning to Pieve by the Lakes, or Ponds, of Lagole. The whole distance to these places and back is not over five miles or so, but as there are some steep ascents in the way, the walk may occupy from two and a half to three hours. Leaving, then, Pieve eastward, the road rapidly descends into the broad Piave Valley. At the distance of a few hundred yards from the village we came to a little way-side Gothic chapel. It belongs to the Palatini family, and dates from about 1500. It has been closed for over a hundred years, because, about that time, as one of the Palatinis told us, it was the scene of a tragedy. A marriage was being celebrated, when the bride, to the question would she take the man for her husband, answered "No." Instantly the bridegroom drew a dagger and stabbed her to the heart. The old altar-cloths, lace, vessels, chairs, and other furnishings of the chapel are still in the possession of the Palatini family. The chapel itself now serves as a powder-magazine.

Fifteen minutes' walk from this brought us to the **Molinà**. The place is so called from the name of the torrent that here flows southward into the Piave, which torrent, again, receives its name from the number of mills on its banks. These, like almost all in this country, are for grinding grain and sawing wood, but one, just above the bridge, we visited

with much interest, as it is for cutting and setting spectacle lenses. We found some seventy men and women employed, and if the quality of the work done was not very fine, there was a compensation in its quantity, for over a thousand lenses are produced daily, besides a number of *metre* measures of wood and metal. The road is carried across the torrent on a lofty stone bridge, looking over which, however, nothing is seen but tremendous boulders amongst which the water of the Molinà is completely hid. The gorge in which it flows is a most picturesque one, and from it, either above or below the bridge, good views are obtained of the *Forcella* of the Marmarole, and of the glacier of Antelao. Immediately across the gorge, on the left bank of the stream, is a beautiful old Gothic chapel, dating, like the one nearer Pieve, from about 1500. There is a tradition that the site chosen for this chapel was on the opposite bank of the torrent, but the building, begun there by day, was mysteriously transported across the gorge to where it now stands, by night. This battledore and shuttlecock game went on for some time, when the builders yielded to what was considered the will of a higher power. The chapel is very plain inside, but from its ceiling a number of votive offerings are suspended, and amongst others the model of a Venetian galley. There is a *trattoria* here, but no village, although probably there once were houses, for at this spot was the old Roman post-station of *Mansiones*.

We seem to be in a classic country, for *Grea*, to which a stiff climb brought us, is said to be of Greek origin, and the name itself seems to favour the supposition. *Grea* is, however, also said to come from *creta*, chalk or clay, and from *ghiaja*, stones. However I am inclined to hold to its Greek origin, for its inhabitants are famed for talking and gossiping, like the old Athenians. When any one talks too much in Cadore he is said "to talk like a man of *Grea*;" and, curiously enough, on the way here we met a beggar, to whom we gave a trifle, who not only thanked us, but, standing in the middle of the road, poured out

his gratitude long after we had gone on. We discovered he was a Grea man. I suspect Grea must really be Greek, and that it is the old *Agora*, the centre of idleness and gossip, of philosophy and business, when it is easy to imagine amongst the eminences around it the political hill of the Pnyx, the rocky Areopagus, and the peak of the Acropolis! Grea is a good example of an old Cadore village, for, of its twenty-odd houses, only three or four are of stone. Its church is a good Gothic building, with a picture of St. Sebastian and St. Roch and the Madonna, dated March 20, 1540, painted as usual in memory of the plague.

Returning to the Molinà we left the highway, going back to Pieve by the *Laghetti di Lagole* and the *Bosco del Rosario* (the Lakelets of Lagole and the Wood of the Rosary), which lie between the road and the river. In utter contrast to all we had seen, we found Lagole a wild, weird, desert, dangerous-looking place. The ground sounded hollow to the tread. It was full of scars and wounds and holes that sloped away down into dripping rocky caverns of unknown depths, once tenanted by wolves. Water oozed up everywhere and everywhere disappeared. Here it formed a tiny rill, there it flowed underground. Yonder water poured steadily into a lake with no visible outlet, yet the lake grew no larger. Where is now a green pool a mill once stood, which went down bodily one night, and nothing of it was ever again seen. The water in many places petrifies objects placed in it. The popular imagination has tenanted this region with elves, called *anguane*, and children after dark speak of it with mystery and fear, and give it a wide berth. One hopeful element is to be found in this repulsive region. Iron, sulphur, and magnesia waters spring up in many places, and as the parish priest of Pieve said, if an English company would take it in hand, and build a bathing establishment, the wilderness would become a garden. If this were done it would only be reviving the work of the Romans, for it is said they had baths here for their soldiers, and Roman remains have been found, amongst which,

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CHAPEL AND BRIDGE OF MOLINA, WITH MOUNT CRIDOLA.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calalso.)





Ciani the writer tells us, was a coin with the head of the Emperor Pius Felix Augustus on one side, and on the other the figure of a warrior grasping in one hand a banner, and holding in the other, by the hair of the head, a prisoner who kneels at his feet. Below this figure were the words *Gloria Romanorum*. It was a delight to enter, beyond the borders of this wilderness of Lagole, a lovely pine-wood clothing the steep sides of a torrent gorge with a carpet of wild flowers and grasses, and a clear gushing stream leaping in tiny cascades from rock to rock. It was the *Bosco del Rosario*. A path through this, and on over steep meadow slopes and fruitful fields and gardens under the *Roccolo di Sant' Alipio*, and the old castle-hill, brought us back once more to Pieve.

Vallesella and Monte Froppa

Another excursion, which may be made either on foot or by the help of mules, is by the village of Vallesella, to the old deserted monastery of the *Battuti* (Flagellants), on the summit of Monte Froppa. Monte Froppa is a beautifully wooded hill about five miles eastward from Pieve, on the left bank of the Piave. It is over four thousand feet above the level of the sea, which means however less than two thousand feet above the river at its base, and the ascent is an easy one. After passing the Molinà some distance, a road that struck off to the right brought us to **Vallesella**. As we approached it we saw on a small hillock three large crosses. It was a Calvary, and on Good Friday the country is lighted up with bonfires and torches, and services are held throughout the night. Vallesella is a quiet little place, composed mainly of eight houses, so arranged as to form an octagon round a fountain in their centre. But it is a very ancient place, for it is mentioned as early as 925 in a document of the Emperor Henry the Bird-catcher. It has several interesting associations. Here we were told

of a poor boy, Bortolomeo Carrera, whose love of acquiring knowledge impelled him to leave his mountains for the open world on a raft. He reached the big city of Treviso, and, whilst supporting himself as a wood-splitter, sought to become a scholar by listening at school-room windows and doors, to the lessons being taught by the masters within. One master took him into his school, and taught him for nothing. The Vallesella boy soon became his best pupil. He by-and-by entered the priesthood, and rose to be Canon of Treviso and Trent. Like Titian, and other distinguished Cadorini, he never failed each summer to visit Cadore, and to help his family and his village, and it was he who in 1336 built in Vallesella its first church. The present church, I believe, is a much more modern one. It contains little except a very much restored picture by Cesare Vicellio. Another association of this place is the Battle of Vallesella, fought in November 1509, between the united forces of Venice and Cadore, and those of the Emperor Maximilian led by the Prince of Anhalt. This was the year, it will be remembered, after the League of Cambray was signed, by which Pope Julius II., the Emperor, France, and Spain combined to crush what they were pleased to call "The insatiable cupidity of the Venetians, and their thirst for dominion." They had small success in Cadore, for the Germans were here routed with the loss of eight hundred men, and were destined to a more disastrous defeat the year following at *Rusecco* on the other side of Pieve. At Lagole we had seen the dreary, dripping, dark dens, the abodes of the evil elves, the *anguane*; here, at Vallesella, we saw the abodes of the *chiare*, or good fairies, which were large open funnel-shaped holes in the ground, with smooth grassy sides bordered with trees and shrubs. There are eight of them near the village, some of which are a hundred feet across, and a hundred feet deep.

Below Vallesella the road descends towards the Piave, which here flows in a deep gorge, in some places hidden from view by enormous boulders, between precipitous

walls of rock. It is spanned, from precipice to precipice, by a fine old covered-in bridge of wood, like the bridge across the Reuse at Lucern. Once all the bridges in the Dolomites were of this character, now there are very few remaining, and this is the only one in Cadore. Ancient though it is, we saw the traces of an older one still at a lower elevation, and traces of an old road in the face of the cliff. In the bottom of the gorge, planks were placed from boulder to boulder, and on these, and on the rocks themselves, men were stationed, who, with their *anghieri*, were helping the stranded logs on their way to the saw-mills.

Immediately beyond the bridge we began the ascent of Monte Froppa, which we accomplished without fatigue in an hour and a half, cutting off some of the zig-zag bends of its winding path. Near the summit was a little chapel, or shrine, with frescoes, and on the flattened summit of the hill itself, commanding a magnificent view of the Piave Valley, and of the great Marmarole chain, were the dismantled monastery and church of the *Battuti*. We got access to the monastery by the *rotondo* (kitchen) window. The *rotondo* seats were still there, on which the monks no doubt spent many a jovial hour, in winter time, round a blazing fire. We ascended two storeys by means of a tumble-down stair-case, and explored on each floor dark narrow passages and ruined cells. From an outlook we saw a man stripping wood off the *rotondo* roof with which, however, he declared, he was going to mend that of the chapel, and not to use it as firewood for himself. The chapel, he said, was kept in repair, as mass is said in it once a year on June 24th, St. John the Baptist's day, when fires are lighted, and a grand festival is held on the hill-top. The chapel was a pretty little building, and on the wall above a window were the words *In nomine Jesu omne genu fletatur*. We next visited the monastery garden. The monks were famous market-gardeners and bee-raisers, and their vegetables and honey found a ready sale in Venice. The monks had long gone, but the bees were

still there, and wild flowers were growing in luxurious profusion, with a few sweet-scented herbs, in a wilderness of weeds and grasses. The monastery, we afterwards learned, was only founded in 1720, and had been twice suppressed,—once by Venice, and once by Napoleon, and was finally dissolved by the kingdom of Italy. It belonged, as I have said, to the *Battuti*, or Flagellants, those fanatical monks who, unbaring their bodies, scourged themselves in public with knotted cords, in order to atone for their sins. Their self-inflicted flagellations do not seem to have effected much, for Ciani, the historian, says, "*Erano più che altro un branco di buontemponi e di fuggifatici*" (They were more than anything else a herd of good-livers and sluggards.)

Sottocastello, the Roman Bridge of Rauza, and the Cascade of Anfella

These three things lie equidistant from each other to the south of Pieve, and the furthest off is about a couple of miles away. I have heard of some one who said it was not the length of the road that troubled him, but the breadth of it, so here it is not the length of the road, but the steepness of it, involving a descent of a thousand feet, that makes a visit to these places quite an excursion. Everything in these parts is on such a gigantic scale that what looks a mere hollow is in reality a deep ravine, and what looks but a mound, is a mountain, only the freshness and elasticity and lightness of the air enables one to walk over them as if they were nothing more than what they seem to be. **Sottocastello** explains its own position. It is the little village we saw on our way from Perarolo, lying under the castle on the southern slopes of the hill, five hundred feet below the level of Pieve. It is a long, straggling place with some good houses and a number of poor ones. One house we entered had a tempting row of *bronzini* of varied sizes, from the tiny baby ones up to huge

“witches’ cauldrons,” all hung as usual with their blackened sides towards the wall, and their bright ones, that shone like gold, towards the light. It was the miller’s house, and as it was necessary to call a family council before any could be sold, and the father and brothers were at the mill, we bespoke some of them, arranging to come again on our return to strike a bargain if possible. Talking to a forest-ranger whom we met, as to the scarcity not only of singing-birds, but even of squirrels, of which in all our wanderings we had only seen one or two, he said that the Government pays the foresters twenty-five centimes (two-pence halfpenny) for every squirrel they kill, because they destroy the trees by eating the tender shoots, and hinder their propagation by eating the seeds. I should think that their destruction, like that of other denizens of wood and field, is a bad economy.

About another five hundred feet below Sottocastello the **Bridge of Rauza**, an old Roman structure, crosses the Piave. The river rushes at the bottom of a rocky gorge nearly 150 feet deep, and the bridge, which consists of a single arch of stone, has been thrown boldly across it. The old arch is well bound up with iron hoops and bars. Its low parapet is paved with flat rough stones, and on this narrow foot-way boys and girls with their goats were amusing themselves by running from end to end above the dreadful chasm. The people are mostly *Alpinisti* in these parts, so it was a bit of practice. The bridge is a sort of resting-place for those carrying wood and hay from the other side of the river, and there were a number of “*tabbie*” (little wooden huts) for storing these materials. From the bridge can be seen northward, just over the *roccolo* of St. Alipio, the peaks and the glacier of Marmarole.

At this bridge a mountain torrent falls into the Piave. It is the **Anfella**, and the cascade is about half-a-mile up its rocky bed. It is a pretty walk to it; the pathway first keeps the right bank of the stream, between it and the mill-race that turns the machinery of three or four saw-mills, and the grindstones and clappers of the flour-

mill of our Sottocastello friend. After that it crosses and recrosses the Anfella, keeping up the broad stony channel of the stream itself. The traveller finds short strong planks lying to his hand wherewith to make temporary bridges. At last, where the Anfella curves round a jutting rock, he is brought suddenly in sight of the cascade leaping out of a gorge over a precipice some fifty or sixty feet in height. It was a lovely sight, although the summer's heat had half dried up the stream, but when the deep and narrow gorge is full of water, it must be a very imposing waterfall. On our way back we stopped at our miller's house again, and, as it was the dinner hour, the family council was convened, and its decision was favourable to our carrying off our pick of the *bronzini*, which we were not slow in doing. They are beautiful objects in themselves, and make handsome vases for plants and flowers.

Mount Vedorchio: Its Baïte and Malghe

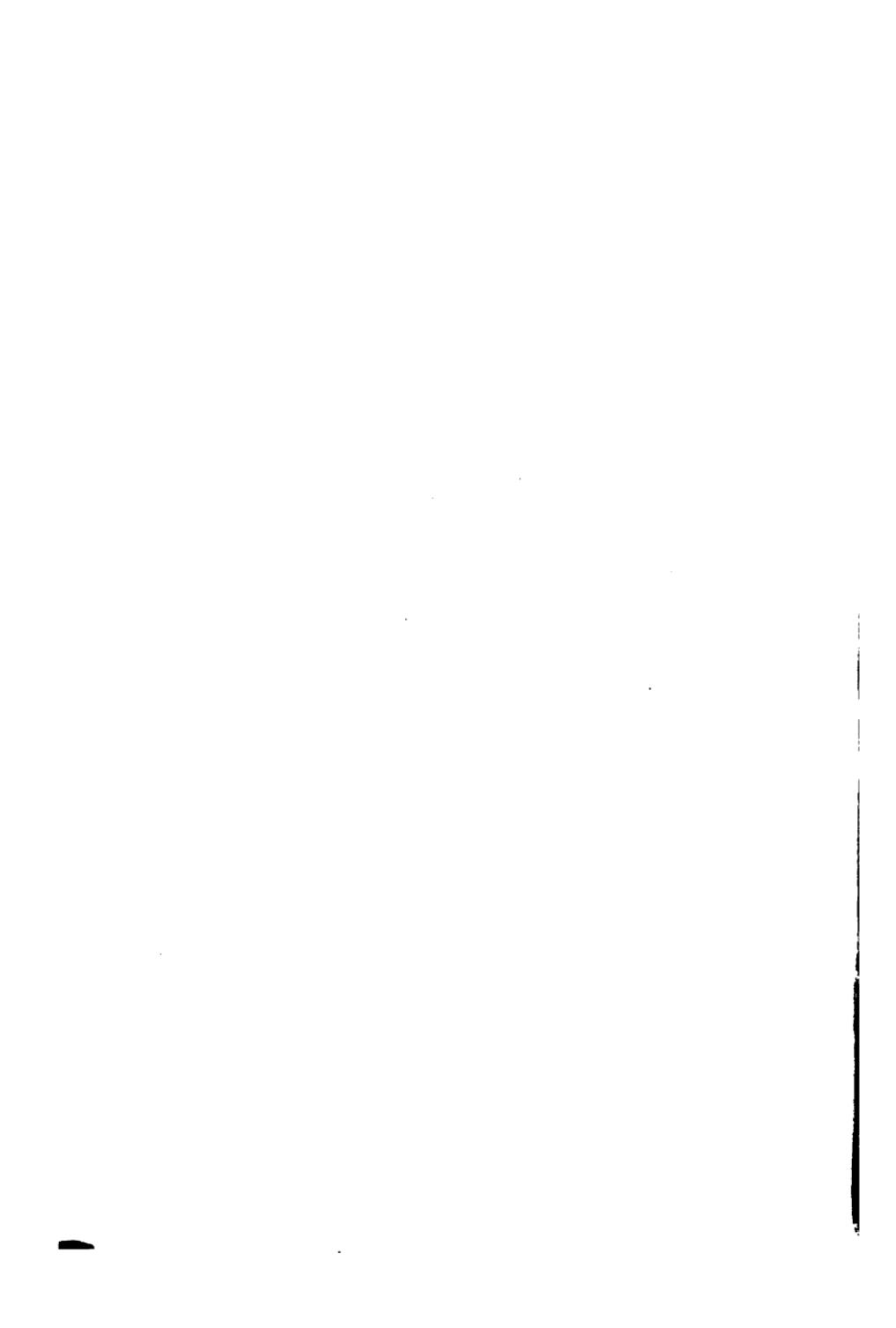
Away above the Anfella falls, away above the source of the stream itself, rises like a great green stair-case, with half-a-dozen meadow landings, the hill of **Vedorchio**. It is 4000 feet high from the Bridge of Rauza, or 3000 above Pieve, but the bridge must be reached before the climb can be begun, so its ascent is prefaced by a descent of 1000 feet, which is of little consequence when one is setting out, but generally counts for something in the home-coming. However, one bright July morning starting betimes, and taking the miller's boy and his donkey with us to carry our wraps and provisions, we made, without fatigue, this delightful excursion. Having reached the bridge we started as before up the right bank of the Anfella torrent, only this time keeping outside of its little mills and woodyards, over grassy fields and hills, which, gently at first and then more rapidly, led us upward. Passing over a rather steep, rocky, thickly wooded part, we came to the first landing, called by the same name as the bridge below, *Rauza*. These small



To face p. 112.

TRE PONTE.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calaiso.)



plateaux are haymaking spots, and the early crop of this, the lowest one, had been cut and carried, and it lay as soft and smooth as any lawn. Another climb and we reached Saracone, the second stair-case landing. Here men were busily engaged with their long glittering scythes cutting the grass, and barefooted women and girls were merrily turning it over, or gathering it into heaps. On this plateau were two *tabbie*, or *fenile*, where the hay is stored, and which serve as sleeping-places for the workers during hay-harvest. We asked why they did not carry the hay in the fine weather to their village barns at once. They pointed to a deep torrent-bed close by, and explained that, whereas now women would have to carry it down on their backs with enormous fatigue, in winter, when the torrent-bed became a river of ice or hard snow, men and boys took it down on *slitte*—a kind of break-neck tobogganaging. Our third climb was rather a stiff one, our path winding out and in, over rocks and round them, among the pines. Near us we saw a wedge-shaped clearance in the trees, marking where an avalanche fell last winter, crashing down all before it. On Medole, our third plateau, we found the hay-makers busy at work as we had seen them below. The peasants come up to these higher heights in families, because they remain from the beginning to the end of harvest, and so we saw not only little children about, but babies in their cradles. As we climbed our next staircase the view became very extensive and glorious, the throne of Pelmo, the glittering crown of Antelao, and Marmarole's rugged reef of peaks and pinnacles standing up against the distant sky-line. Our fourth landing was called Mousse, and our fifth Pradel. At this latter place the grass was uncut, and among it grew fairy anemones and lovely lilies with many flowers on each stalk:—"Behold the lilies of the field." Tall, tapering larches lay prone on the ground, ready to be sent down to Venice to become masts of ships. At our next stage, Deslona, the hay-harvest had not begun, so it was another flower-garden. Our boy-guide proudly told us that the trees on this part of the mountain belonged to

his family. They cut the timber about San Lorenzo's day—not the martyr, but a saint who was Patriarch of Venice some few years after the alliance of the two Republics. We were now 4000 feet above the bridge of Rauza, and it had taken us, at our leisurely pace, three hours to gain the height; but with a load of wood on a sleigh, and the ice in good condition, the journey down is made in thirty minutes.

Having now gained the top of our green staircase, our way lay across the broad irregular summit of the mountain. We here bade farewell to the hay, but not to the flowers, for soon we were among acres of *Roses des Alpes*, all in full bloom. They were wonderfully beautiful, with their green glossy leaves and bright red flowers. This land was what is called *comune*—all have the right to come and pasture their flocks and herds upon it. The pine-trees were dwarfed, and had lost their green freshness from having been long months under the snow. As we passed over the brow of the last rise, we saw lying below us in a green hollow the *baite* and *malgha* of Verdochio; whilst ahead of us rose Spè—a huge circle of fantastic Dolomite peaks. We counted over a hundred pinnacles, some of them grouped like the fingers of an uplifted hand. The *malgha* is where the cattle and the goats and pigs, that are brought up to this height for the summer months, are sheltered, and in the *baite* the men live who look after them, and make the butter and cheese. We were hospitably entertained with what the place could afford—lots of warm new milk, and new cheese and butter, the men in return sharing the contents of our luncheon-baskets. We ate our food with the merry tinkle of the cow-bells sounding all around, for their wearers came crowding about us, evidently regarding our presence as an unheard-of phenomenon.

No dining-room could command views more magnificent than ours, as we sat under the open sky in sight of the pinnacles of Spè, with the thickly wooded *Val Diavolo* stretching down to the Piave river, with the reef of Marmarole rising white, gray, and red against the sky, and of majestic Antelao, with its glacier, like a great, green, full





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REFUGE "VENEZIA" ON MOUNT PELMO.

Erected by the Venetian Section of the Italian Alpine Club. (See Appendix.)



river, flowing over its summit away down its northern slopes. But now came the question of our return journey. The shepherds wished us to stay the night, and we fain would have done so, but when we saw the only beds they could offer us—their own couches of well-used heaps of hay—we reluctantly had to decline their offer. About four o'clock in the afternoon, we turned our backs on the *baite* and *malgha* of Vedorchio, and reached Pieve in safety, as the evening bells were dying away in the still, clear air.

Eastward up the Piave Valley, beyond all the nearer places I have spoken of, the road runs temptingly through a rich and well-populated country, and so, before leaving Pieve, we made several carriage excursions in that direction.

Salagona Chapel and Intermediate Villages

CARRIAGE EXCURSIONS

(Salagona Chapel, 10 miles from Pieve. Intermediate villages—Domegge, 4 miles; Lozzo, $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles; Pelos, $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles; Lorenzago (seen across valley), $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles; Vigo, $8\frac{3}{4}$ miles; Laggio, $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles; Salagona, 10 miles.

Diligence leaves Pieve 6.40 A.M., arriving at Pelos 9 A.M.; leaves Pelos 4 P.M., arriving at Pieve 6.30 P.M.; fare either way, 1 fr. 75 c. For places beyond Pelos Diligence is not available, as it goes off there to Lorenzago, and over the Mauria Pass. By private carriage all places can be visited except Salagona; hire for excursion: one horse, 10 fr.; two horses, 18 fr.)

One of the first carriage excursions we made was to the little chapel of **Salagona**. About this chapel nothing has up to the present been written, so far as I am aware, even in Italian (although Professor Ronzon of Laggio, with whom we visited it, will probably soon remedy that), and yet it is the oldest and most interesting in Cadore. It is the only one that has stood since the twelfth century untouched, and Christian frescoes, dating from that time,

still beautify its walls. The explanation of its having been let alone, and ultimately forgotten, is that it stands far removed from house or hall, on the green slope of the pine-clad hill of *Costa d'Oro* (Ridge of Gold), with the great mountain mass of Tudaio looming up behind. Once it was the parish church of a prosperous village, of which it alone now preserves the name. Every house, every trace of Salagona has disappeared, although sometimes the ploughshare strikes against foundation walls; and its disappearance is a mystery. No one knows how or when it happened. Though ten miles off, the chapel was visible from Pieve as a black speck on the green hill-face that partially shuts in the Piave Valley eastward, when we started early one morning by carriage to examine it, and the intervening villages we should go through on the way. Rattling downhill, past the *Molinà* and the head of the branch-road to Vallesella, we reached **Domegge**, four miles from Pieve. The name has been derived variously, from *due milia* (two miles), that is to say, two miles distant from *Mansiones*, the Roman post-station at the *Molinà*, and from *Domiculæ* (a little house), which is favoured by its being mentioned in a Latin document of 1188 as *Domeglæ*. Anyhow it is very ancient, for in its old church of St. George, which was taken down in 1771, an inscription was discovered giving the date of its foundation as 809. It has, however, now a very modern look. Ugly gray houses of stone, with a few more pretentious ones with gardens in front enclosed in iron railings, line the highway. We did not require to ask the reason. The village was all of wood till 1871, when a disastrous fire burned over a hundred houses, leaving but fifty of the Cadorin type, which are still standing. Below a beautiful double Gothic window, of what must have been as splendid old palace, we saw the words—

*Laudate semper sia
Il nome di Gesù, e di Maria,
E sempre sia laudato
Il nome de Gesù, Verbo incarnato.*

Domegge has produced during the thousand odd years of its existence not a few men celebrated in Cadore story, but the one of greatest present-day interest is Giuseppe Ciani, the historian of Cadore, to whom I have had occasion frequently to refer. He was born in 1793, educated at Vallesella, Grea, Pieve, Padua, and Venice, and became a priest and professor at Ceneda, where he died in 1867. He was one of those noble, cultured, liberal priests whom Italy produces from time to time, like Ugo Bassi, Garibaldi's chaplain; like Giovanni Verità of Modigliana, who guided Garibaldi across Italy by night to the little republic of San Marino, carrying him on his shoulders across river and bog; or like Natale Talamine of Cadore, of whom I shall have to speak by-and-by; and Ciani, like all these, because of his patriotism, suffered a prolonged and bitter persecution at the hands of the Papal Church.

Two and a half miles beyond Domegge the village of *Lozzo*, probably from *lucus* (a wood) is reached. Its appearance, like that of so many others, speaks of disasters. These were caused by the forces of nature and the carelessness of men. Almost all its houses are new, having been built after fires that occurred in 1830, 1847, and 1860, and they are built upon a *frana* (fall of rock), that, loosened from Mount Mizzoi by the terrible earthquake of 1348, overwhelmed the village. Many Roman remains have been found here; one of them was the valuable Etruscan, or Euganean, inscribed stones, now preserved in the Pieve Museum.

At the distance of a little less than a mile beyond Lozzo a bridge, called *Ponte Nuovo*, carries the road across the Piave. It then divides, one branch going off to the right up the valley of the torrent Piova, whilst the other continues up that of the Piave. Taking the Piova Valley road we visited three places, all near each other—Pelos, Vigo, and Laggio, and then went on to the solitary romantic chapel of Salagona.

Pelos, a mile from Lozzo commands a view of both valleys—the Piova and the Piave. A road goes off from it

across the Piova to **Lorenzago**, a big village opposite, and then winds upward and eastward over the Mauria Pass into Carnia. To the west Pieve castle stands out against the sky. Hence Pelos was an important strategic spot, and the name is supposed to mean "at the foot of the light," because on the summit of the hill behind it, beacon fires were kindled to warn Pieve of the approach of an enemy. Glancing at an altar-piece, said to be by Cesare Vecellio, and at some pictures by Da Rin, who was born at Laggio, but lived here, we hurried on to Vigo, situated a mile and a quarter higher up the valley.

Vigo is undoubtedly the Latin *vicus* (English termination *wich* or *wick*), a village or hamlet, and the name has come down from Roman times. The first thing we saw on entering this village were the words in big letters on the front of a building: *Biblioteca Cadorina* (Cadorin Library), that is to say, a library containing books about Cadore. Its founder is Professor Antonio Ronzon, a native of Laggio, who afterwards told us that, whilst it contained chiefly archives and books about Cadore, he welcomed on its shelves books on all subjects. There is a reading-room attached, and, although the institution is in its infancy, it contains two thousand volumes. Vigo was once an educational centre, for an old chronicler speaks of it having a boarding-school, or college with residence, in 1208. The first church we came to was *La Difesa*, erected in 1512, in accordance with a vow made in gratitude for a miraculous deliverance which the country received in 1509, from the Germans, who, it is said, like the Syrians of old at Dothan, were stricken with blindness, and were led across the Piave before they recovered their sight. It is a pretty Gothic chapel, with a good groined roof. Its walls were once covered with frescoes, but they have been defaced, and hidden by the erection of altars of a more recent date. One however remains, which, with a document beside it, refers to the erection of the building. Climbing up to the highest part of the village, where stands the parish church of S. Martino and the chapel of S. Orsola, we passed on

the way an inn with this inscription: *Alla Temperanza; vindita vino, liquori ed altri* (To Temperance; wine, liquors, and other things sold). S. Martino is a large Gothic building, built in 1559, containing four pictures of some value, a S. Catherine, and a Deposition by Cesare Vecellio, and "Christ blessing little Children," and "Christ purifying the Temple," by Tomaso da Rin. In the sacristy were a quantity of silver crosses, pyxes, and chalices. Most of the churches in Cadore had their silver carried away by the French, in the time of the Napoleonic invasion, but in this parish all had been concealed in the earth, and so saved. Adjoining S. Martino, on a slightly lower level, is the chapel of S. Ursola (St. Ursula), the second oldest church in Cadore, and one of its most interesting. It is a Gothic structure, which was erected in 1344, by a native of Vigo, Ainardo, a son of the *Podestà* of Cadore, Odorico, who immediately preceded Guecello of Pozzale, Titian's great-grandfather. On the exterior on one side of the door is a fresco of Mary, and on the other of St. Christopher. Its walls inside are covered with frescoes, illustrating the life of St. Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins, and her lover Conon, son of the King of Britain. These, however, seem to have been painted over others of a more Scriptural character. These last are thought to have been done by order of Margaret, Ainardo's wife, after her husband's death in 1346. Cesare Vecellio speaks of these frescoes as being ancient in his day and highly valued. They are, however, very much destroyed from the same cause as those of the *Difesa*, the setting up of altars. In the earlier centuries all these chapels had but one altar, and it stood out from the wall in the centre of the apse, the priest officiating behind it with his face towards the congregation. This is plain, because the apses are invariably frescoed, and generally the subject of the one in the centre is the Crucifixion. It is so in this chapel. But in comparatively modern times the main altar was thrust back against the wall of the apse, hiding the frescoes; and side altars were erected, concealing in like manner the frescoes on the

walls. Where the old Gothic chapels of Cadore have been left standing (for many of them have been taken down) they all bear witness to the simplicity and purity of the early Church, and to its deterioration in modern times. The frescoes on the ceiling of this chapel show Christ and Mary and the four Evangelists. Professor Ronzon discovered lately in the archives of Vigo, Ainardo's will, dated 1344; and on opening a tomb in the chapel he found two coffins of wood, containing the remains of Ainardo and his wife.

Ten minutes' walk from Vigo brought us to **Laggio**. The name is said to come from *lacus* (a lake), although now nothing of the kind is near it. It is a large village of modern stone houses, some of them five storeys high. It is extraordinary that in the country the peasants should build, not pretty cottages, but such enormous stone structures. However, several households belonging to the same family reside under the same roof, as it used to be in the palaces in Venice. The *comune*, too, helps the people in building, allowing them so much per room. The old houses of Laggio were destroyed by fires, one which happened in 1705, and another in 1854, the first having been caused by lightning. This is the native village of the painter Da Rin (by the brook), the descendant of a famous Cadore family. However, it was of more importance to us to find here Professor Ronzon, an enthusiastic lover of Cadore, who has written much about it in a series of almanacs, several of which he put into my hands. He also accompanied us to the old **Chapel of Salagona**, which was the goal of our excursion.

Half-a-mile's walk along a footpath that circled round the "Ridge of Gold" (so called because the precious metal was once found there) brought us to the chapel. It is a small one, only measuring twenty-five feet long by fifteen broad, but it is a gem, precious as a memento of the past, and precious as a Christian monument. It is covered with what are probably twelfth-century frescoes, and therefore Biblical, although they show here and there in subject, design, and colour, the interference of a later hand. In the

apse is, as the central figure, Jesus Christ, with John the Evangelist with a scroll in his hand on one side, and Mary, and Peter with the keys on the other. Then there are two frescoes of scenes from the life of St. Margaret of Antioch, to whom this chapel is dedicated. One by the side of John represents her being tempted by Satan, as a dragon, in her dungeon, and the other her martyrdom by decapitation. The fresco of St. Peter is clearly of a later date than the others. The frescoes on the right-hand wall represent the Birth of Christ, the babe having behind his head a golden disc with a cross on it; the Circumcision of Christ; St. Jerome with his lion and Bible; a Christian Pilgrim; and lastly, the Ascension, where Christ is represented standing in the midst of the apostles, blessing them, whilst being parted from them. On the west end of the chapel, and running beyond it on to the left wall, are frescoes of the twelve apostles, including St. Paul, and the two Evangelists, St. Mark and St. Luke—fourteen in all who had seen the Lord—each with either a book or a scroll in his hand. The other frescoes on the left wall are four saints, and a St. Christopher carrying Christ on his shoulder, and his budding staff in his hand, the whole figure so large that it reaches from the floor of the chapel to its ceiling. We have already met with one of these enormous figures of St. Christopher when visiting the old church of San Nicolò at Treviso (*see Chap. II. p. 14*). I have said that this chapel and its frescoes date at least from the twelfth century, and Professor Ronzon discovered quite recently, in the archives of Vigo, a document that lends countenance to this supposition. This document is dated 1309, and gives an inventory of the property belonging to the chapel, which proves that at that date it not only existed, but was a wealthy and somewhat important parish church. There then it stands, silently witnessing to the Biblical Christianity of these long dead generations of mountaineers. Service however is occasionally still held in it, and to suit its requirements, the altar has been, as in the chapel at Vigo, pushed back against the mosaic of Christ in the apse,

partly breaking and concealing it. An effort is now being made to induce the Italian Government to declare it a national monument, which will be the only way to have guaranteed the preservation of this, the most precious Christian monument in Cadore—a Chapel of Gold on its “Ridge of Gold.”

One other church I must just mention before leaving this valley. It is that of *S. Daniele*, perched high up on a spur of the great mountain of Tudaio behind these villages. Up till 1862 this was, like that of Salagona, a Gothic chapel covered with old Christian frescoes. But in that year it was destroyed, and the present uninteresting, bare, white-washed one built on its site.

Forest of S. Marco and Intermediate Places

CARRIAGE EXCURSION

(Forest of S. Marco 20 miles from Pieve. Intermediate places—Tre Ponte, $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles; Gogna, $8\frac{3}{4}$ miles; Auronzo, 12 miles; Mines of Auronzo, 16 miles.

Diligence leaves Pieve 6.40 A.M., arriving at Auronzo 10 A.M.; leaves Auronzo 3.30 P.M., arriving at Pieve 6.30 P.M.; fare either way 2 fr. 50 c. Diligence does not go beyond Auronzo. Private carriage preferable; hire for excursion: one horse, 19 fr.; with two horses, 32 fr.)

In going to the ancient forest of S. Marco our road was the same as that described in the former excursion as far as *Ponte Nuovo*; crossing that bridge, instead of turning up the Piova Valley, we kept to the Piave one. Ten minutes' drive up the left bank of the river, which here flows in a deep, narrow gorge with precipitous rocky sides, brought us to *Tre Ponte*, so called because at this spot three bridges, each nearly a hundred feet high, running in different directions, meet in the centre, forming three triangles, and carry the road over the Piave, over the Ansiei, a tributary of the

Piave, and over a gorge. It is a romantic spot, and an historical one. It is associated with the struggles of the mountaineers against the Germans and Austrians in 1508-9, and again in 1866. A story in connection with that of the earlier date is worth telling. When the Venetian General Savorgnano arrived here in pursuit of the Austrians, he found the bridge, which was then of wood, had been burned. The Cadorini quickly extemporised another, by cutting down an enormous tree, and causing it to fall right across the gorge. Savorgnano, a good soldier but not a mountaineer, was afraid to cross. One of his soldiers named Paolo, who was also one of his tenants, crossed it and recrossed it, walking, running, and hopping, so as to convince him that it was safe. Then he offered to carry the General on his back. The General consented. When he had him half-way across above the awful gorge he coolly turned his head round, and smiling said, "General, do you mean to press me for my rent which I am behind-hand in paying you?" The soldier's ready grasp of the situation amused him; and so when he got safely over, he not only did not press for his arrears of rent, but made him a present of his farm. Here, too, in 1866, the last blow was struck in the war of independence against Austria. General Galeazzi led the Cadorini to victory, with the loss of but few men, amongst whom, however, were two Vecellios from Pieve. Whilst in pursuit of the flying Austrians messengers arrived from Belluno with the news that articles of peace had been signed, and that the Austrians had agreed to evacuate Venetia and Cadore, which soon after became integral parts of the kingdom of Italy. In commemoration of this victory an obelisk has been erected at *Tre Ponte* with the following inscription: "1866, Agosto 14—le bande armate—i popolani—nemico invadente—arrestarano."

"What brings you here?" was the question put to us by the leader of a band of charcoal-burners from the mountains, who were resting themselves with their sacks of charcoal on the parapets of the bridges. We explained to him the delight the country gave us. He looked the

image of amused surprise as he said, "I cannot understand it. If *I* get a day's holiday I run off to the town, where there are shops and people."

Our road, running between the Piave and Ansiei rivers, now brought us in a few minutes to *Gogna*, another classic spot.

Gogna

(Gogna, traditional site of Greek city Agonia ; mineral waters.

Albergo Gogna, and *Stabilimento Balneare* ; room 2 fr. ; pension (exclusive of baths), 8 fr. per day.)

Tradition tells us that here stood the ancient Greek city of *Agonia*, which was destroyed in the first half of the fifth century by Attila and his Huns. Down in the valley of the Ansiei, on the left bank of the river there are iron, sulphur, and magnesia springs. These were known to the Romans, who called the place *Ægonia Balneanensis*. Cesare Vecellio speaks of these facts, and also of Greek and Roman remains being found in his day. The site of the old castle is still pointed out on a cliff above the river Ansiei, which bears the name *Castellato*. After the times of the Romans the waters seem to have been neglected, until 1671, when we find in the archives of Pieve, a document bestowing upon Girolamo da Ronco, by the Council of Cadore, the use of "the sulphureous water that springs above *Tre Ponte*, under the city, in the place of Gogna." Little came of this, however, and it was not till 1870 that a small bathing establishment of wood was erected. Success attended the enterprise, which led ultimately to the erection of a very comfortable hotel, with properly arranged baths, the property of Signor Barnabo. This enterprising proprietor told us that he purposes still further enlarging his establishment, and adding to the attractiveness of the place by erecting, in a pine-wood adjoining, a large hotel. Certainly Gogna with its waters, pine-woods, walks and drives, has many natural advantages to make it a popular health resort.

At Gogna our road again divides, one branch running eastward up the right bank of the Piaye river, and the other northward and westward up the left bank of the Ansiei. Taking this latter at the distance of a couple of miles from Gogna, we entered the great Auronzo Valley. It is a vast open valley with glorious mountains, Ajarnola, Giralba, and many others overlooking it.

AURONZO

(Largest place in Cadore, consisting of a series of villages.
Population 4500.

Hotels—*Alpi, Vittoria, Grazie*; rooms 2 frs.

Auronzo is a centre for Alpine climbing. Headquarters of the Cadore Alpine Club, where all particulars as to ascents, guides, &c., may be obtained.)

The town of Auronzo, consisting of a series of villages, nine in number, stretching along the road for a couple of miles, is the largest in Cadore. In old maps and documents it is called *Aurinum*, from *aurum* (gold), because of the rich mines in its neighbourhood, which, if not yielding gold, yield minerals which bring that precious metal to Auronzo. Its antiquity is attested by the Roman remains that have been dug up, and by the documents referred to above, which go back to the tenth century, but it has experienced within recent years so many disastrous fires, destroying all its old houses, the place of which has been taken by modern-planned stone ones, that it seems to have more connection with the nineteenth than with the ninth century. The commune is rich in wood and minerals, and liberally helps the people to build, so the houses are all substantial, and not a few are artistic. Its two chief villages, or *borgate*, are *Villapiccola* and *Villagrande* (the Small Village and the Big Village). The former has an ambitious-looking new church, only finished some thirty or forty years ago, at the cost of £12,000—not a trifling sum to be paid by the junior fraction of the town. It is octagonal in form, has a dome, a flat roof, a good

echo, and some frescoes that contrast in subject, form, and colour with those of the Salagona Chapel. Beside it stands an old *campanile* with some bits of beautiful Gothic moulding in it, and the remains of some good frescoes. It seems to mourn the loss of the old Gothic chapel that was destroyed to make room for this out-of-place Greek one. I asked a peasant standing by why the old church was taken down. "Oh," he said, "it was thought too small and old-fashioned; but," he added, "it was better than this one. We were always warm and dry in it; but this new one is so big and so high, we are frozen in it in winter, and the rain comes through the roof, because it is flat. It cannot be kept out. The church has had two roofs, too, since it was built, first one of lead, then one of wood, but both are bad." The fact of the matter is the old little chapels were adapted for the place and the people, and the modern ones are utterly unsuitable in size, and form, and construction. At *Villa-grande* we witnessed the same thing, a fine old *campanile* standing solitary and alone, beside a huge modern church. Once beyond all the *borgate* of Auronzo, our road ran for a couple of miles or so parallel with the broad bed of the Ainsiei, then crossing by a stone bridge the *Rio Giralba*, we turned more westward between Mount Rosiana and Mount Campo Duro, and, after about another two miles' run, crossing the Ansiei by a wooden bridge, we reached the *Miniera Argentiera*, the seemingly inexhaustible mines of Auronzo. The Emperor Berengaria, who lived in the tenth century, speaks of them as having been famous in his day, and they are known to have been wrought for nearly a thousand years. The shafts all run straight into the face of a hill called "The Hill of Silver" (*Collina Argentiera*), as silver was once found in it, although now mainly, or only (for the silver is not worth separating), lead and zinc. The mines afford employment to the inhabitants of Auronzo in summer, for in winter, because of the freezing of the water that cleans the minerals, they cannot be worked. There is no foul gas, no night



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REFUGE "SAN MARCO" ON MOUNT SORAPISS.

Erected by the Venetian Section of the Italian Alpine Club. (See Appendix.)

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work, no danger of any kind. Another run of five miles beyond the mines, through splendid pine-woods that clothe the valley and the lower slopes of the great Dolomite giants all around, brought us to the far-famed forest of *San Marco*. This forest lies between the right bank of the Ansiei river and the Marmarole chain. It is about three miles long by one and a half broad, and is entirely of larch trees, most of them of very noble proportions. As I have already said it was a gift from the Republic of Cadore to that of Venice, made in 1463, and its trees since then till now have been dedicated exclusively to naval shipbuilding.

San Stefano

CARRIAGE EXCURSION

(The village of San Stefano, 15 miles from Pieve.

Diligence leaves Pieve at 6.40 A.M., arriving at San Stefano at 11 A.M.; leaves San Stefano at 3 P.M., arriving at Pieve at 6.30 P.M.; fare, single journey, 3 fr. Private carriage for excursion: one horse, 14 fr.; two horses, 25 fr. The road descends 523 feet to *Gogna*, and then ascends 648 feet to San Stefano. Road runs parallel with the Piave all the way.

Hotel—*Albergo Aquila d'Oro* (good and cheap.)

In going to San Stefano, one must traverse the road already gone over as far as *Gogna*. There, instead of going up the Ansiei Valley, we kept that of the Piave, that strikes off to the right. A pine-wood is passed through, and then the valley becomes simply a gorge all the way to San Stefano, a distance from this point of over six miles. So narrow is it, that even in the summer the sun has to climb upward in the heavens for some hours before it can even get a peep into it. A glorious gorge it is, formed by Mount Piedo on the one side and Mount Tudaio on the other, the space between containing but the river and the road. The river, up the right bank of which the road runs almost all the way, sweeps round Mount Tudaio, washing

the base of sheer cliffs, and awful bare slopes, that rise 10,000 feet into the air. The road on the Mount Piedo side is in some places buttressed up above the roaring river, at others it is cut into the living rock; here it pierces a tunnel, there it goes under overhanging cliffs; and at last, as it nears San Stefano, it becomes once more, what it was when it left Gogna, a lovely pine-tree avenue. It is one of the most glorious mountain passes that can be imagined. The road was made in 1839, and cost three-quarters of a million pounds, and it takes over a thousand pounds annually to keep it in repair. San Stefano is a lovely place, from which the Piave can be followed to its source some ten or twelve miles higher up at Mount Peralbo; and excursions can be made in many other directions. Its inhabitants, and those of the many villages scattered around, ought to be happy, for they have no taxes, the communes being all rich in timber—San Stefano alone having an annual income of twelve thousand pounds from this source.

We spent a Sunday at Pieve. Our friend Don Giuseppe conducted the early service, which was to have begun at six o'clock, but unfortunately he overslept himself, so it was nearly seven before he made his appearance. But an hour earlier or later at a place like Pieve is of little consequence. Monsignor Da Via conducted the later service, and preached a good little sermon. The men, as the "lords of creation," occupied the front seats and the women were behind, while the boys amused themselves playing hide-and-seek at the side doors. Two farmers near us did a stroke of business on their knees. The one sold the other a yoke of oxen. This did not vitiate "their assisting at the mass," according to the decrees of the Council of Trent, and the better the day and place the better the deed! In the afternoon, the people "rose up to play." All the men mustered in the *piazza* for a game at ball, in which the hand, clad in a big boxing-glove, is used to strike it from one to another. The shopkeepers put up their shutters, and so did householders who had windows on the ground floor. Sides were chosen, the balconies and upper windows were filled with

spectators, and an exciting game was engaged in. An adjournment was made before the final break-up to the cafés and hotel bar-rooms. Pieve has need again of St. Paul and his soldiers.

In closing my account of Pieve di Cadore, I wish to say that the hotels are all very comfortable, especially the *Albergo al Progresso*, which has been recently improved and enlarged. In looking over its visitors' book, I noticed the names of A. Tennyson and Hallam Tennyson, 1880, and W. E. Gladstone, Catherine Gladstone, Mary and Herbert Gladstone, 1879. The Gladstone family had spent ten days in the house, and on leaving Mrs. Gladstone had written, "*Bella veduta, molto confortabile, contentissimi.*" If that encomium held true then, it is more emphatically so now, as under its new conditions it leaves little to be desired.

CHAPTER IX

VALLE DI CADORE

(Distance from Pieve 3 miles. Height above sea-level 2900 feet.
Population 800.

Hotel—*La Stella Alpina* (newly built), rooms 2 fr. Post and telegraph offices. Good doctor and chemist. Once the “Versailles” of Cadore.

Diligence leaves for Belluno, 29 miles, daily at 10 A.M. and 6 P.M., fare 5 fr. ; and for Cortina, 16½ miles, at 6.30 A.M. and 7.20 P.M., fare 3 fr. 40 c.)

LEAVING Pieve di Cadore we returned on our steps as far as Tai, where we again joined the great highway for Toblach. When we had left the last house of the village some way behind us we reached, at a cross road, a little chapel with good columns and capitals. These chapels are here called *anconas*, from the Greek, *ancon*, an elbow, because placed generally at the elbows, or angles, made by cross roads, and the word affords another proof of Greek influence in Cadore. On this *ancona* was painted the word *Nebbiù*, and a hand pointed to where the little village lay in a triangular space between high hills, about half-a-mile off to the right. The word *Nebbiù* is from *nebbia* (mist), and true to its name, most of its houses were concealed from our view in this white mountain veiling. Proceeding on our way another quarter of a mile or so, when we were almost at the entrance to Valle, we came to a bridge which carried our road across the gully of a torrent that comes down from *Nebbiù*, named *Rusecco*, or the *dry stream*, because, except after rains, it is usually dry, for the little water there is gets swallowed up amongst the big stones of its channel.





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VALLE DI CADORE, WITH MOUNT ANTELAO.
(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calalzo.)

This stream and this spot, however, are historic, because here was fought, on March 2, 1508, between the Germans on the one hand, and the Cadorins and the Venetians on the other, the famous battle of "Rusecco," or, as immortalised by Titian in his picture of the scene, "The Battle of Cadore." I am aware that Mr. Gilbert, in his book on "Titian's Country," disputes the statement that this was the scene of the battle, and goes out of his way to find another bridge and stream. He admits that the opinion of Don da Via, the parish priest of Pieve, was against him. I do not know if Mr. Gilbert consulted other local authorities, but if he had he would have found that every one, without exception, fixes the scene of the battle here, and as Don da Via often said to me, the name of the battle, "Rusecco," and the sketch that remains of Titian's picture (for the picture itself was burned in the fire that destroyed a large part of the Doge's palace in 1577), confirm it. The incidents of the battle are the following. The Germans, under Sistraus, had taken Pieve Castle, and Venice had sent soldiers, under Bartolomeo d'Alviano, to the aid of the mountaineers. D'Alviano crossed the mountains by Zoldo and Cibiano in spite of a snow-storm, and reaching this place from the westward, met the Germans from Pieve. An incident occurred at the beginning of the fight, which reminds one of what happened on the eve of the battle of Bannockburn, only its influence was greater, for it almost determined the day. Ranieri was leading a wing of the Venetian army. Seeing him poorly mounted, and in advance of his troops, Sistraus, spurring his own war-horse, bore down upon him with lance in hand, as Sir Henry Bohun charged Robert the Bruce. Like the Scottish king, Ranieri deftly turned his pony's head, and avoided the lance-thrust, and then rising in his stirrups as Sistraus passed him, struck him on the back of the neck with his battle-axe, almost decapitating him. His lifeless body rolled from the saddle. The Germans became at once demoralised, and were completely routed. The Venetians and Cadorins lost but twelve men, the Germans nearly two

thousand, amongst whom were three women, who, disguised as soldiers, had followed their husbands or their lovers into the fight. When the Doge's palace was restored after the fire of 1577, the painter Francesco da Ponte (Bassano) was commissioned to paint another picture of the "Battle of Cadore," to replace the loss of Titian's. This picture now forms part of the decoration of the *Sala del Maggior Consiglio*.

A step beyond Rusecco brought us to **Valle**, the "Versailles of Cadore," as it has been called. Although we have scarcely come three miles, I must yet call a halt at this village, for it illustrates in a special manner the close connection that existed between these Cadore villages and Venice. Valle, like the Queen of the Adriatic, has its old Byzantine and Gothic palaces, its old historic families, its pictures by the old masters, its old documents and books throwing light on the early history of the country—found mostly in private houses, for the village archives unfortunately perished by fire in 1509, during a time of war—and what many like to find in Venice, old furniture, and old armour.

The village is finely situated on a spur of Antelao, 600 feet above the Boite river, just where it bends southward to flow through a gorge between the two mountains of Dubiea and Zucco, to fall into the Piave at Perarolo. It is divided into two parts, *Nogarè*, which runs parallel with the highway, and *Costa*, Valle proper, which clusters round an old *piazza*, and then runs down the crest of a hill to where stands its white church, and where its old castle stood, on the edge of a precipice above the Boite. The name *Nogarè* is from *noce*, a walnut tree, and signifies a place where such trees grow, and the word *costa* means ridge, or edge, and thus well describes the situation of that part of the village. The view in all directions is very fine. Looking down the Boite gorge, between the wooded slopes and green grassy plateaux of Dubiea and Zucco, one sees a great range of serrated peaks, those of Duranno, against the blue sky, while looking in an opposite direction north-

ward, the eye wanders upwards, across *broli* (gardens with fruit-trees), patches of maize and flax, of potatoes and barley, to high grounds to which the villagers take their cattle in summer to crop the Alpine grasses and flowers, then still upward, across long stretches of pine-tree tops to bare tracts of rock, and white runs of fallen dolomite at the foot of precipices, whose overhanging cliffs guide the eye still upward, until it rests on the glistening ice and snow on the summit of Antelao.

As there was no hotel in Valle when we were there (although one had just been built, and was almost ready for occupation), we had to hunt about for rooms, and we were fortunate enough to get them in the house of Signora Galeazzi, at the *Carmine*, which is situated in the Nogarè part of the village. It was built in 1566, and was the old manor-house of Valle, although that distinction now belongs to one erected beside it a hundred years later, now inhabited by Dr. Galeazzi Alpago Novello, belonging to another branch of the family. Our hostess received us most kindly, showing us over the house, and saying, *Siete padroni nella nostra casa* (You are masters in our house). We knew little about the Galeazzis when we secured our rooms in their house, but we soon learned to know them well. Although this branch of the family is poor, everything spoke of their nobility, antiquity, and past power and influence. Above their door was their coat of arms, carved in stone, consisting of a cross and three stars, and their walls were hung with portraits in oil of their fore-bears, who had been politicians, lawyers, writers, merchants, travellers, and soldiers. The names of some of them were not unfamiliar to us in Venetian and Cadorin history. One was of a venerable-looking old man—the great-grandfather of our hostess—dressed picturesquely in a red waistcoat, and a light blue coat, with a white tie, and a black skull-cap. He holds in his hand a document marked *Privilegium 1347, A.D. Bertrando concesum*, and his arm rests on books with the title *Statuto Cadiorii*. It was Taddeo Jacobi, a famous lawyer, writer and patriot, who,

after the peace of Campo Formio in 1797, when Napoleon ceded Cadore to Austria, went to Vienna to the Emperor Francis, with that document in his hand, to beg that its articles should be respected, and who was successful in his mission. Napoleon invited him to accompany him to Paris, but his patriotism forbade him to quit his native mountains. Besides other writings, he left behind him eighteen volumes in manuscript on the history of Cadore. Another striking portrait was that of Giovanni Antonio Galeazzi, dressed in the costume of 250 years ago, whose medals and decorations speak of the heroism of his career. On his portrait it is recorded that he gave more than half his substance to help his fellow-countrymen on occasions of distress. The house has been divided up, and the part we inhabited was a rambling old place. Above doors were secret entrances into recesses in the walls, large enough to conceal several men. The *soffitto*, or attic, extending right across the house under the roof, we found to be a delightful place. All kinds of things were here stored—bride-chests, chairs, benches, old glass, old dresses, pictures, parchments and documents, with the seals of popes and emperors dangling from them ; and here were also stored this year's maize, and cheeses fresh from the mountains. The famous charter of Charles V. to Titian came into the possession of this family by marriage, but was sold to the Solero family at Pieve, in whose house we saw it. The old parchments referred chiefly to the transfer of houses and lands, some of which concerned the Vecellios. We also saw the pedigree of this family, which runs back to 1350.

Having formed an acquaintance, which soon ripened into a friendship, with Dr. Galeazzi, we went one day to see his palace, which is one of the most interesting, not in Valle only, but in Cadore. As I lifted the door-knocker, I could not but observe that it belonged to the class that in Venice travellers go to see—a piece of old art in bronze, bearing the arms of the family. The lobby is decorated with fine old armour, and the spirit of Captain Jerome Alpago Novello, who fought under Nicolo Canal and Pietro

Mocenigo against the Turks, in 1470, seemed to breathe from his complete suit of mail here preserved. The house is a gallery of family portraits, and one of the first we saw was of this brave soldier. Near it hung two portraits of Pietro Galeazzi, the commander of the castle of Botestagna, one bearing the date 1436 and the other 1473. In the latter he appeared in a black velvet suit, with cap of the same, and a broad white collar, and cuffs. A fine portrait was that of Rodolphus Galeazzi, Doctor of Philosophy, in his academic dress, and with his books piled on the table beside him. Antonio Galeazzi, the standard-bearer, grasping the Venetian colours, red, white, and green, with the Lion of St. Mark in the centre, was an interesting portrait. The youthful Francesco Galeazzi, captain when not out of his teens, was another representative of this family of soldiers. The Titian family was represented by a portrait of Cesare Vecellio, which was specially valuable, because painted by himself. There was also a good picture of Marinus Grimani, Doge of Venice, 1595. There were some likenesses of women, of which two were of Cristina Alpago Novello Galeazzi, who lived about 1700; one showed her as a child and the other as a bride. She wore a watch, and a good big one too, dangling outside her dress, so there is nothing new under the sun. Another portrait was familiar to us, being that of Bernardina Bardelloni, who was married to the Doglioni, after whom the Doina gate of Belluno was called. Three other portraits were of daughters of the family, who became nuns, Elizabeth, 1746, Teresa, 1761, and Cristina, 1761, whose memories are preserved not only by these paintings, but by some marvellously beautiful and costly priests' robes which they spent their years in working, and which, happily, are still in the possession of the family. They look as fresh as if they had just left the hands of the sisters. There are also a number of groups of figures by Brustolon, which have a considerable art value. As in the Solero Palace at Pieve di Cadore, so here there were cupboards full of parchments and documents, bearing the seals of

doges, popes, and emperors. One document bore the seal of the Doge Antonio Pruili (1618), another that of Pope Paul V., the enemy of Fra Paolo Sarpi. A curious parchment was a petition in which the applicant asked to be made a noble of Venice. It was dated "The Castle of Cadore, 1659," and Cadore certified that the petitioner had never soiled his hands by doing any trade or labour, nor had ever broken the law. In the library there were many old books, although I am not aware that there were among them any of very great value. Two rooms in the palace merit to be specially mentioned. One has its walls lined round and round, from floor to ceiling, with embossed leather. The ground of this wall-covering is silver, and the designs stamped upon it, in colour and in gold, are of castles and towers, with banners flying. It is said to be even a more handsome leather than that which covered the walls of the Emperor Joseph's rooms in the Solero Palace, at Pieve. The other room has panelled walls, and a beautifully carved and gilded oak ceiling. Both rooms are furnished with splendid old carved furniture, the bride-chests and commodes being picked out in blue and gold. As in the older manor-house, so also in this one, we enjoyed as much as anything a rummage in its big *soffitto*, hunting out old furniture, and old books and documents hidden away in chests under the massive tree-trunks that support the roof, and bind together the walls of the house. The results of our hunts, for we beat the bush more than once, may appear in the sequel.

I may say that there is a tradition that this part of Valle, or at least the highest part of it, was built upon a *frana* (landslide) that overwhelmed some ancient village of which no record remains. During our stay a tunnel was being driven into the face of the hill in search of water, when the door-step and door-posts of a house were discovered, thus confirming the tradition.

Going next to the main part of the village, Costa, a whole little world of interest surrounded us. First, the fountain in the centre of the *piazza*, that throws out sparkling water

in all directions, marks the spot where, up till 1830, stood the church of the *Santo Spirito* to which the Council of Cadore adjourned to seek Divine guidance in 1420, which resulted in their offering themselves as allies to the "good Venetians." The church, unfortunately, was taken down in order to allow room for the present highway. Facing the *piazza* on the north side stands the old palazzo of Count Piloni, round the curved façade of which runs the road. It was the founder of this family who, in 1286, as *Podestà* of Cadore, drew out the famous *Statuto Cadorino*, which remained in force till the days of Napoleon. The palace externally still bears traces of a past splendour. The Piloni coat of arms is over its lofty doorway, above which is a beautiful double Gothic window, with good pilasters and columns, and dog-tooth decorations. On entering, however, we found the palace in a sad state of decrepitude, its ground-floor rooms turned into shops and stores, and its upper storeys being tenanted by poor families. Vestiges of its former glory were seen in two old oil portraits hanging in the atrium, and in a room now used as a kitchen, with a good wooden panelled ceiling.

Crossing the *piazza* and following the village as it runs down the steep hill-side, we noticed a small house with a fine balustrade of wrought iron to its balcony. It was a part of the palace of Costantini Lancia. It is an historic house, but contains little to tell of its past splendour, but a few bits of antique furniture, and a curious Diana-of-Ephesus Madonna, in a good carved and gilded wooden frame. Next this is a small Palazzo Costantini-Leone; the larger one, in which the Emperor Maximilian stayed, who was related to this family, has long since disappeared. In the upper rooms are portraits of members of this once famous family. One is that of Bortolo Costantini, standing as a boy by his father's side, who afterwards figured in a great revolution, and with whose death the family became extinct. We had seen a flagstone built into the *piazza* fountain bearing his name, and now we learned that it was his tombstone. He was buried in the now demolished

church of *Santo Spirito*, and his stone, with those of other tombs, was utilised to build the fountain. The stone has been lately reversed, so that the name is no longer visible. The library in this house contained many good old books, chiefly of a theological character. I carried off with me one, more for the sake of its covers than for itself. It is entitled *M. Valerii Martialis epigrammata ab omni rerum obscenitate*, and it bears the date 1587. Its boards are of wood, covered with leather, and carved on one of them are the Annunciation and Birth of Christ, and on the other His Crucifixion and Resurrection. The concluding words of the book are: "*Summae sapientiae et perfectae scientiae principi Cristo Jesu, Gloria Sempiterna.*" In this house there is a very fine old Byzantine picture of the Madonna with three saints, awaiting, like the library, a purchaser! Beyond this, above the door of another palace, a coat of arms consisting of two crescent moons and the letters L. B. drew our attention. It was the old Palazzo Barnabò. Two families now live in it. It chanced that the good-wife of the upper floor was coming down her outside stair, and so we asked her if she had any antiquities in her house. "Nothing," she said, "it's a poor dwelling." However, as we persisted, saying "There surely must be something in the old Palazzo Barnabo," she, very much amused, said at last, "Come up and see." Our persistency was rewarded, for one of the rooms was lined—walls and ceiling—with beautifully carved wood. That on the walls was divided into equally sized panels or compartments, by fluted pilasters. The cornice of the ceiling consisted of five rows of carved work, the broadest band, which was about seven inches wide, containing leaves enclosed in half circles. Between window and ceiling the entire wall space was filled up with carved work. The effect of the whole was very fine, although all was covered with a heavy coat of whitewash.

One other house I must mention. We knew that there used to be three branches of the Costantini family at Valle, and we had discovered the houses of two of them by

the arms above the door—that of Costantini Lancia, by a star and lance, and Costantini-Lione, by stars and a lion. Seeing a little off the main line of the houses a very large dilapidated building, we entered it by its open door, and there, by the fireplace of the kitchen, stood an old wooden chair with three stars carved on it. These told us that this was the palace of the oldest branch of the family.

I may here say that the family of Costantini is one of the most illustrious historic families of Cadore, having furnished men famous as lawyers, scientists, governors, soldiers, and statesmen, from 1330 down to the present time. We read of one, Andrea, generously supplying the poor people with corn for seed in a time of dearth in 1527; of another, Rocco, who was Titian's lawyer, and became a member of the *Maggior Consiglio*, Venice, in 1609; of other two, Bortolo and Antonio, who served as captains in the army of the Prince of Orange; and lastly, the present representative of the family is the Honourable Girolamo Costantini, the Under-Secretary of State for Public Instruction in the Italian Government.

From all these houses, as indeed from almost all the dwellings in Valle, magnificent views are obtained up and down the Boite Valley.

But now we had reached the foot of the village, where stands the church of San Martino, on a beetling cliff above the Boite river. Although the lowest building in the village, its position is yet very commanding. A great expanse of valley can be seen from it. We were not surprised to learn that here in early times stood a castle, with strong fortifications and watch-towers, and that among the old foundations Roman coins, and other remains of that epoch, have been found. At the same time a church existed here as early as 1203. The site since then has been greatly lessened by falls of rock, and it stands a good chance of being diminished still more, at no very distant date, for towards the edge of the cliff several depressions have taken place, and long cracks and fissures yawn ominously, and give a rather alarming feeling of insecurity. As seen from below, the

crags overhang, and are full of clefts and caves. Mining was once carried on under this cliff, which partly accounts for its hazardous condition, but apart from that all dolomite rock is very fragile ; and, as an old villager expressed it, “*la terra camina sempre qui nel inverno*” (the ground is always walking about here in winter). The church contains a good picture by Cima of Conegliano, representing St. Roch, St. Sebastian, John the Baptist, and St. Fabian. The old *nonzolo*, or sacristan, told us some one offered to buy it at the price of covering its surface with gold pieces. We were shown an old *pianeta* of velvet and gold and silk embroidery for which 600 fr. had been offered. There was also a wide scarlet robe with a tassel, which tassel, the sacristan said, cost 16,000 fr. Valle claimed the sole right to use this robe and tassel, but Pieve disputed it, and the two villages went to law. Valle won, but the legal expenses cost 16,000 fr. “A costly tassel,” said the *nonzolo*.

The people of Valle are in many respects not unworthy of their ancestry. They are industrious, frugal, hard-working, good-living, and courteous. The old love of liberty burns as brightly in their hearts as ever. I was struck with the way a sober matron fired up as she told us how, as a girl, in 1866, she used to burnish up her father’s weapons, and those of the men with him ; and how, when they were out in ambush, all the women of the village, old and young alike, would ascend the cliffs that overhang the narrower parts of the valleys, and pile up on their edge rocks and stones, *la cavalleria della montagna* (the cavalry of the mountains), as these missiles are called, and then as the Austrians passed below send them bounding down upon their heads.

As Valle, like most of the other villages in Cadore, does not afford work for all its sons, many of them go off to America, and making money there, send help home to their families, and finally return to spend comfortably, on their “native heath,” the evening of their days. In their absence their wives and sisters do the work which is often of a kind

hardly adapted to their sex, and yet it does not seem at all to deprive them of their innate dignity and self-respect. We were struck with this when visiting the fort of Monte Zucco, which is almost opposite the village, when it was in the course of erection. Upwards of fifty girls from Valle were there, carrying wood for the burning of brick, and serving the builders in many ways. All were not only scrupulously clean, but well, even picturesquely, dressed. All, too, wore some kind of becoming ornament. Some had pieces of coloured silk ribbon round their necks, others had strings of coral, or of Venetian beads, while not a few had massive gold chains, evidently heirlooms in their families. Two nice-looking young girls, sisters, whom we saw thus working, we afterwards found digging out the foundation of a house in the village. Asking them about their work, they said that they were helping their father and their mother to build a house for themselves. I have said that the Valle people are also remarkably courteous. They never pass one without saluting with such words as "*Servo suo*" (your servant); "*Padrone*" (master). If you say you like their country, they answer "*Ho gusto*" (I am pleased); "*Mi consolo*" (it comforts me). In leaving you they say "*Sani*" (be well); "*Conservi*" (may you be preserved). The phrase equivalent to our "How do you do" is "*State pulita?*" (are you clean?). The word *pulita* (clean) is in constant use. "*Ha fatta proprio pulita*" (you have done it very well). We never heard any bad language in Valle, and we saw in several places the following notice against its use posted up: "*Cristiano, non bestimare, Dio è il tuo creatore, e judge; Gesu è il tuo salvatore; Maria è l'amorosa tua madre; l'ostia, cioè Gesu in sacramento, è il pane del anima tua; i santi sono i tuoi avvocati presso Dio. Cristiano, rispetti questi nomi sacri se vuoi che Dio retira i flagelli, e ti benedica.*"

The villagers attend church well, although taking care never to come under clerical domination. They are jealous, as all the Cadore people are, of their civil rights, and also of their religious liberties. They, like the Venetians, have

a high opinion of Protestants, as men of truthfulness, honesty, and Christian principle. Their constant intercourse with Germany in part accounts for this. In conclusion I may say that there is not much of Mr. Ruskin's "mountain gloom" among these Valle people, but a good deal of his "mountain glory." In conversation with them we did hear tales of personal suffering and of family unhappiness; still the sufferers seemed to have found that flower of hope which, having tribulation as its root, does not soon wither, and the vast majority has nothing to complain of but the blessing of having lots of hard work to do.

Delightful walks and excursions can be made in all directions around Valle.

Nebbiù.

A pleasant forenoon's stroll can be made to **Nebbiù**, lying in its mountain-locked recess on *Rusecco*, by a path that runs through the pine-wood that clothes the lower slopes of the hill that separates it from Valle. Taking this path, the first building we came to was a mill for cutting wood and grinding grain. The enterprising proprietor had made a little money in Austria, which he laid out in its construction, and in that of a reservoir to economise his scanty water supply, and thus he makes a living and supplies a want his village long had felt. The church is a large and comparatively new building with a handsome portal, which was pointed out to us as having been one of the entrances to the palace of Adami at Pieve which was destroyed some hundred odd years ago. For the rest we found Nebbiù a curious, old-world place, with many wooden houses of the Cadore type, although one or two large stone ones had been erected recently, the fruit of money earned in Austria and Germany. One of the first of those beautiful century-old bronze three-legged pots, of which I have spoken, which we bought in Pieve, came from Nebbiù. The priest of Pieve, Don da Via, got it for us from a poor bed-ridden fellow-priest here, from whom we also bought

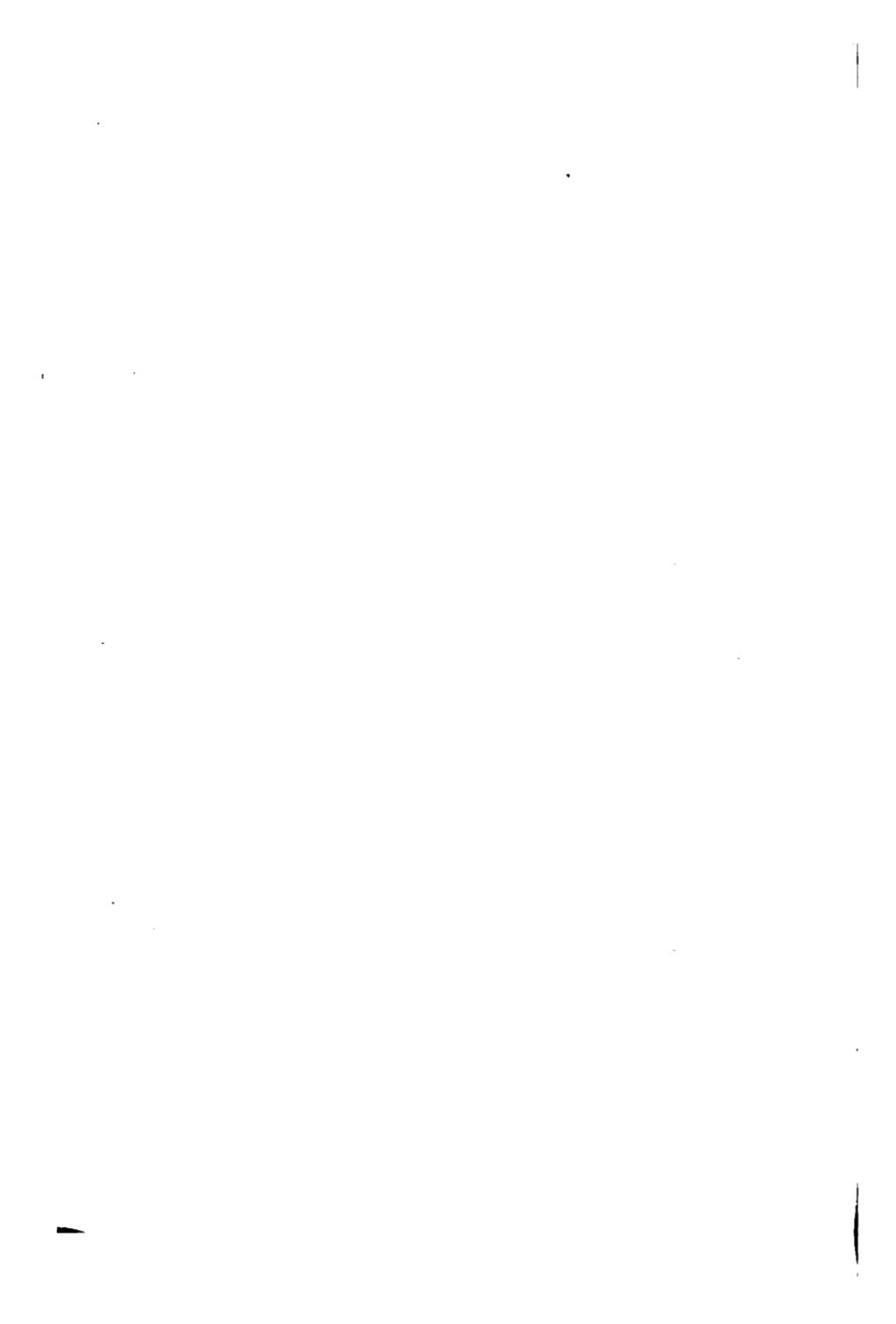


To face p. 142.

VALLE DI CADORE, WITH CHURCH AND MOUNT ZUCCO.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calalzo.)

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one of those massive *calamai* (inkstands) of brass, which are seen in public offices, and in the sacristies of churches in Venice. Perhaps the Nebbiù people knew we were desirous of buying these things, for several women offered to sell us *bronzini*, which we were never slow in acquiring. One woman, from whom we had bought one, said, as she counted the number of paper *lire* pieces she held in her hand, "Now I shall be able to gratify a wish I have had for years, to go to Venice and to Padua on St. Anthony's day." But her wish even yet was not to be gratified. At a late hour that night, in a downpour of rain, the poor woman appeared at our door with the money in her hand, and begged us to take it, and give her back the *bronzino*, for her daughter had cried ever since she had learned it had gone, as it had been in the family for generations. Needless to say we returned it to her, and helped her in another way towards accomplishing by-and-by her pilgrimage. The mountain, *San Dionisio*, can be ascended from Nebbiù by a very steep path, and it was from here that Queen Margherita climbed it in 1881. But a much easier, though somewhat longer ascent can be made from Valle, of which I shall have occasion immediately to speak.

La Salina

Another enjoyable walk and scramble, which can best perhaps be made of an afternoon, is to go to *La Salina* (the place of salt) at the foot of Mount Dubiea, to which the chamois and wild goats descend towards sunset to eat the salt. Passing through *Zuval*, the few detached houses below Nogarè, we reached the bridge of *Ruolan*, which crosses a torrent of that name that falls into the Boite. The bridge is four hundred feet below Valle, and the Boite is another four hundred feet below the level of the bridge. From the water's edge a striking view is obtained of the cliffs between which it flows, and of the great old castle rock on which the church of Valle stands. Crossing the Boite by a narrow

wooden bridge a whole country of meadow, and wood, and *frana* reveals itself between the river and the face of Dubiea. Making straight for Dubiea over this varied land, we came to a torrent flowing in a deep ravine at the mountain's foot. The stones in its bed are covered with a white substance. It is salt, or magnesia; hence, as I have said, the name of the place. The chamois and wild goats of Mount Dubiea are very fond of licking this substance, and about sunset, companies of five and six descend to gratify their appetite. On the evening we took this walk we saw their footprints in the soft sand of the torrent, but we got no glimpse of the graceful creatures themselves. From the bridge of Ruolan the old road to Perarolo ran through the pine-woods under the cliffs of *Monte Zucco*, above the Boite river. Grooves in the stones and rocks show the seemingly impassable places over which carts must have been dragged in thousands during the past centuries. The road can still be followed on foot, and a delightful walk it makes. It is largely used by the peasants as a short cut to Perarolo.

Monte Zucco

Monte Zucco, to which I have already referred as the hill of the fort, affords endless walks. It is over 4000 feet above the sea-level, which means however only 1200 above Valle. Its ascent is an easy walk, for although its west side towards the Boite Valley is a sheer precipice, its eastern side is one long, gentle, undulating slope of meadow, pine-wood, and heather. The view to be obtained from its summit is one never to be forgotten. Starting early one cloudless morning, we made the ascent. As a military road runs up the mountain from Tai as far as the fort, we went by it so as to avoid the dew-laden grass of its shady northern slopes. For company we had, for the first part of our excursion, all the cows and calves, sheep and goats of Tai, which were being led to high, sweet pastures. The man and boy in charge were constantly shouting "*Hu*,

Gigia,” “*Hu, Silva*,” “*Hu, Nanna*,” as one and another animal lingered behind to crop some tempting mouthful. In answer to our inquiry he said that every animal had its name, which it knew quite well, and that it usually obeyed when called by it.

As we reached a higher and higher belt of pines the great circle of peaks around us lifted itself up too, gleaming silvery in the early sun. As we wandered upward we met a *guarda-bosca* (a wood-ranger), who volunteered to accompany us. We went first to a level spot overhanging precipices above the fort, where a lofty white and red painted *antenna* (flag-staff) and semaphore was erected, with which the soldiers signal to a far-off station, and an Alpine refuge, high up on the slopes of Marmarole. Above this was *Cresta Rossa* (the Red Crest), commanding a very extensive view up and down the valley. As we mounted higher the trees diminished in size and quantity, and a large number of them were broken and splintered. Our forester-guide explained how never a thunderstorm broke over Zucco, but trees are struck by lightning. A storm of snow and wind one winter lately destroyed six thousand of them.

At last we gained the summit. The view was beyond all our expectations. Below us at a depth of over two thousand feet lay Perarolo, with all its saw-mills and wood-yards, its basins, bridges, and rushing rivers, and so near that it seemed as if one could spring down into its midst ; beyond it peeped the roofs of Caralto, and close below us those of Damos. Across the Boite was the *Saline*, and the torn face of Mount Dubiea, from which fell the *rovina del vente-tre*, and above it all its great flat top of glade and forest, the haunt of the chamois and wild-goat. At our right hand lay spread out the whole of Valle, the sun glinting on the windows of our Galeazzi home. Around in every direction towered the giant Dolomites—the throne of Pelmo, with its icy cushion ; Civetta, with its rosy-coloured peaks ; King Antelao, with its crystal crown ; and the great chain of the Marmarole leading the eye eastward and southward to

Tudaio and Duranno, with all the villages in the valley of the Piave beyond Pieve, cradled in their embrace, and the old Salagona chapel standing out in its solitariness. As we sat in the sunshine enjoying the wonderful scene, the sound of bells came softly up from many villages, reminding us that midday had come, and that it was time to return home, as we had brought nothing with us to satisfy our appetites, whetted by exercise and mountain air.

Our return journey was quickly made, for our guide conducted us by foot-paths that went winding in zig-zag fashion down the cliffs below *Cresta Rossa*, and afterwards through the woods and meadows almost straight to Valle. The Rev. F. W. Robertson tells a story of a very highly educated schoolmaster teaching a school of rustics in the Lake district of Cumberland, who, when asked how it came to pass that he buried himself in a retired, unknown spot, replied, "When this situation was first offered me, I was on the point of marriage, and I calculated that it would be worth more to me to live on a small salary, with domestic peace, in the midst of this beautiful scenery, than on a much larger sum in a less glorious spot." I hope our forester possessed an equally imaginative and poetic nature, for he had need of it. His salary, under the commune of Tai that employed him to look after the woods, not of this mountain only, but of those around Nebbiù, was twenty pounds a year.

Mount St. Dionysius

Another splendid mountain excursion, with the account of which I close this chapter on Valle, is to the summit of St. Dionysius, so called from a little chapel to that saint, that crowns it. This mountain is about seven thousand feet above the sea, but it is as easy of ascent as Mount Zucco—even more so—for a military road runs from its base to its summit. This road winds very gently up the face of the mountain, making long easy bends among pine

trees, and across level plateaux. The grass by the roadside, as well as that on the slopes and plateaux, is all as smoothly cut as on an English lawn, because it is in great demand by the peasants for haymaking. We started to make the ascent at sunrise, a girl with a creel on her back carrying our provisions for the day. The appearance and colouring of the mountains were wonderful. Eastward their peaks were seen, in every detail, in sharp dark outline against the brightening sky, while westward they seemed self-luminous, as they caught the morning sunlight and glowed with that peculiar clear purplish hue which only dolomite rocks possess.

Each turn of the road as we ascended afforded us a wider and a grander prospect, although as the light grew the colouring faded from the mountain-tops, and they assumed a more uniform gray or white. At eight o'clock, after a three hours' leisurely stroll—for our climb only amounted to that—we reached the beautiful grassy glade of *Costa Piano*. The view from this plateau, which was about half-way to the summit, was very fine. We counted some scores of peaks, many of them looking like sentinels guarding the mountain passes. After a hearty breakfast, which was breakfast number two for that day, we resumed our ascent. As we rose higher and higher the pine-trees became stunted, and the grass less trimmed, until at last both trees and grassy slopes were left behind. More and more peaks kept coming in sight, and at last we reached the summit, which was spread for us with a bright soft carpet of flowery heather into which the feet sank, and on which we ourselves ultimately sank to rest.

The view was new and magnificent. Circle beyond circle of giant mountains, of strange form and rich colouring, were visible. The highest were those to the north and west, among which stood out Antelao with its crown of ice, and Pelmo with its great walls of rock and flat snow-covered summits. But the most wonderful sight of all was to the east. There, just behind Pieve, was Spè, a perfect coral reef, or rather a great coast-line against which the sea

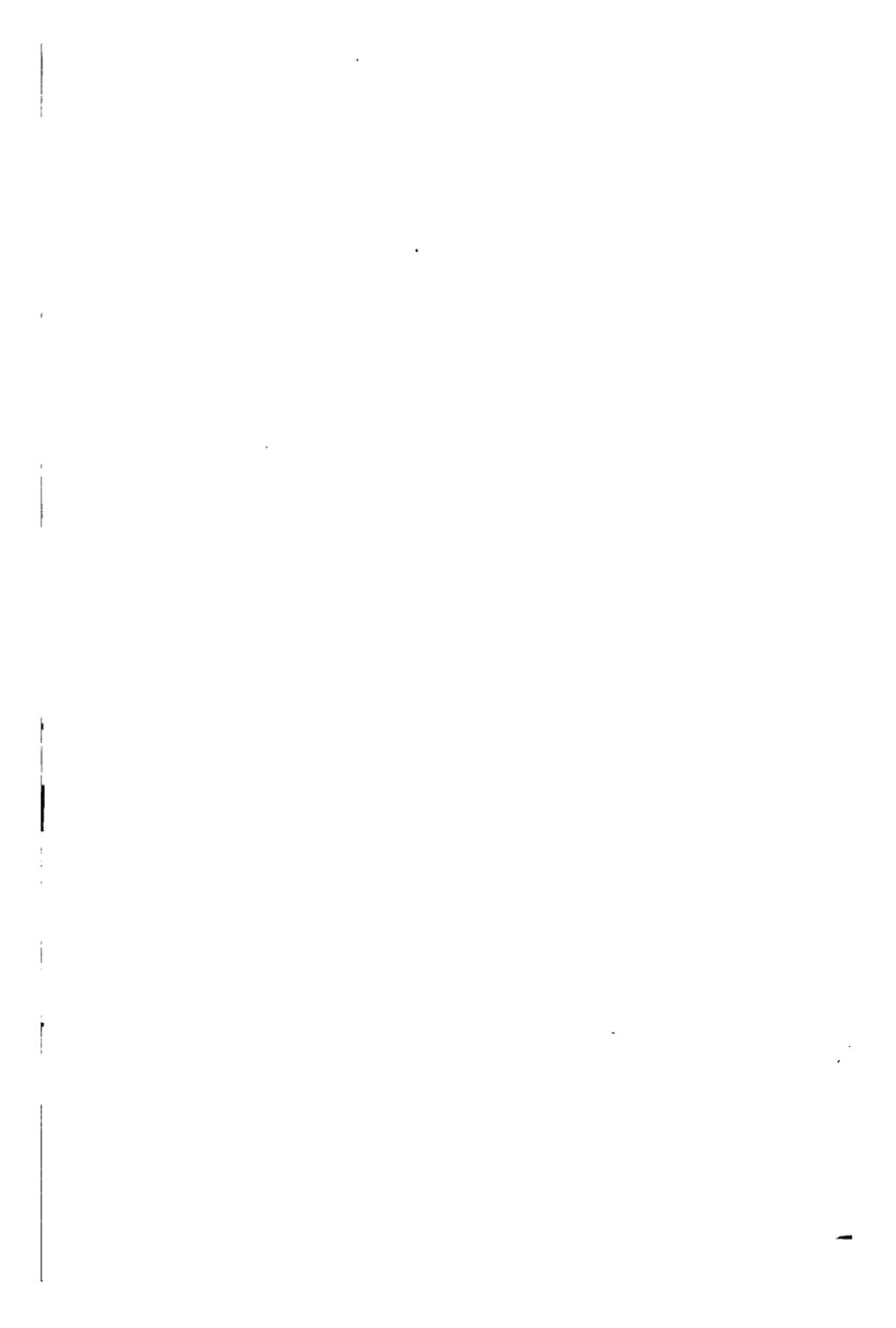
had been beating for ages, and from which it seemed just to have retired, leaving it a line of hard spires and stalks, with the broken rock, ground to sand, lying heaped around them. I counted a circle of seventy-nine large, and a hundred and fifty smaller peaks. Opposite Spè, across the Piave Valley, were the towers, and castles, and rocky cathedrals of Marmarole, whilst between them rose a billowy sea of mountains away over Auronzo, towards the Pusterthal. I do not suppose that any mountain among the Dolomites of the same altitude offers a more extensive view than does this of St. Dionysius. I am almost forgetting to mention the chapel, which in this great temple of nature counts for little. It is a tumble-down little place. The door was locked, but some boys, who had come up after us from Nebbiù, climbed on to the roof and managed to get down through the tiny belfry, and opened the door from the inside. There were some tolerably good pictures of Mary, St. Dionysius, and St. Bernard hanging on its walls. We lingered long among the soft heather in the pure air enjoying the view, and when we did start, a couple of hours or so brought us down, without much fatigue, to our pleasant quarters at Valle.

Last summer, that of 1895, was one of the driest ever remembered in Cadore. Hardly a drop of rain fell from the end of July till the end of September. The result was that there was little grass for the cattle, crops ripened before the ears of grain were half filled, pine-trees were burned brown on southern slopes, and, worst of all, not a few of those disastrous forest fires broke out, that from time to time lay waste whole tracts of country. The scene of one of these was a mountain in the Piave Valley, within sight of our Valle windows. A dense forest of pines clothed its slopes, from the river's brink a thousand feet below us, to its summit six thousand feet above us. The fire began at the lowest point, caused, it is thought, by some one passing up the river having dropped a lighted match. Once fairly kindled it went steadily upward, leaping from tree-top to tree-top. In three days it was within two thousand feet of the summit.

Fortunately, there was no wind blowing, so its path went in a straight line. The mountain-side was full of precipices and plateaux. At night we saw the fire, like a great glowing fiery serpent, darting rapidly up the slopes. Then there was a pause at the foot of a precipice, but it was only for a moment. Presently its glowing head appeared five hundred feet above, and then onward and upward it went again. Nothing could be done to stop it. Two companies of soldiers and the peasants themselves did all they could, but it was utterly impossible to climb the precipices, and at last it was left to burn itself out, which it took over a fortnight, however, to do. The forest was full of wild-goat and chamois, which were seen scampering off in all directions. Amongst the rocks, too, were many serpents, whose hissings were heard distinctly, as they vainly tried to escape from the fire, and hundreds were destroyed. This forest belonged to the commune of Sottocastello, so the whole of the villagers incurred a loss. We were told, however, that in these fires the trunks and main branches of the trees are never burned, and are thus still available for the market. Some time later we heard that two other forest fires were raging, one at St. Stefano and the other at Sapada. Doubtless the lamentable destruction of the village of Caprile was also attributable in part to the exceptionally dry season.

Before leaving Valle we reaped the fruit of our rummages in the *soffittos* of the Galeazzi palaces. We found that into the older manor-house, where we lodged, the taste of last century in the matter of furniture had been felt in full force, and that the discarding of the comparatively light and beautifully carved chairs, tables, benches, and bride-chests of Cadore workmanship, in favour of the massive unwieldy mahogany articles with which our rooms were furnished, was the result. The bulk of the old furniture had been sold off, or distributed amongst the peasants around, and what we saw in the attic was all that was left. We offered to relieve the *soffitto* of the latter *intrigo* (perplexity), as it is called. Then, through our buying the Costantini chair, with the three stars on it, that we had seen by the kitchen

fire of the old palace, our love for Cadore's ancient wood-work became known; and very soon one peasant after another came to our door with a piece of it on the *gerla* on her back, until we had recovered over a dozen of the old Galeazzi chairs, and amongst other things a lawyer's bureau that had belonged to a member of the Vecellio family. The drawers of this were labelled with old Cadore names, and one of them with that of a near descendant of Titian, in which we found parchments regarding transfers of property that had belonged to the painter. Dr. Galeazzi also made me the present of a couple of beautiful little carved benches, and a couple of old arm-chairs, as a souvenir of himself and his palace. Before we left Valle we saw a load of our precious antiquities, drawn by two stout horses, start on its way to Belluno railway station, *en route* for Venice. Much of the furniture stood sadly in need of repair, but planks of Dolomite walnut went with it, and now the "auld looks maist as guid as new," as it is seen decorating and furnishing our Cadore room in our Venice home.





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MOUNT ANTELAO

(From a drawing by H. G. Keasbey, Esq.)

CHAPTER X

VALLE DI CADORE TO CORTINA

**Vallesella — Soppiano — Venas — Cibiana—The Chiusa—
Vinigo — Peaio — Vodo — Caneia — Borea — San Vito —
Chiapizza—Acquabona—Zuel**

(Cortina in Austria 16½ miles from Valle ; ascent of road 1170 feet ; Italian frontier 12½ miles ; Austrian Custom-house at Acquabona 14½ miles, where travellers' luggage examined.

Diligences leave Valle 6.30 A.M., and 5.20 P.M., arriving at Cortina at 10.10 A.M. and 9 P.M., fare 3 fr. Private carriage : with one horse, 11 fr. ; with two horses, 25 fr.

Hotels at Cortina frequented chiefly by English—*Stella d'Oro* and *Faloria* ; pension from 3½ florins.)

AT Valle di Cadore we entered the domain of the monarch mountain of this region, Antelao, and it was mainly through its territory that the next stage of our journey lay, our road running along its slopes, winding westward and northward up the Boite Valley. Soon after starting we came close under its precipitous cliffs, as we went up a small lateral valley to its narrowest point, in order to cross by a bridge the torrent Sella—one of the many that Antelao sends down to feed the Boite. The road here is cut into the side of the mountain, with a wall of rock on the one side, and a steep slope on the other, so it is a somewhat dangerous spot for peasants with burdens who have to pass above or below it, and we saw two crosses painted in white on rocks by the roadside, marking places where fatal accidents had occurred. One of these was close to the bridge, and beside it there was a stone with this inscription : “The peace of

Christ to Stefano da Cal, a roadman aged sixty, who here met an instantaneous death by falling down the mountain while carrying a load of wood, May 2, 1888." The phrase, "The peace of Christ," is a remnant of the Pauline Christianity of Cadore. Such accidents unhappily are not rare, as the peasants often go to great heights in search of wood, or to cut hay, and, descending by dangerous narrow paths, along steep slopes, and above precipices, though their shoes are made with long sharp nails in the heels for safety, they sometimes slip and lose their lives. On the torrent above the bridge are some saw-mills, and below it are others in the village of **Vallesina**, which consists of a few old houses. Its position looks a very dangerous one, as a landslip from Antelao, or the torrent Sella in flood, might sweep it bodily away—and indeed disasters of the kind have happened to it more than once.

A little beyond this point a very fine view is to be had. Far below the Boite river is seen, rushing between wooded slopes, then disappearing as it passes beneath the *Pocroce* bridge which spans the cliffs at the altitude of nearly 200 feet, then reappearing as it dashes away over its rocky bed, between precipices over 600 feet in height. We next passed the little hamlet of **Supiane**, consisting of a few houses of the old type clustered on a height above the road, and shortly afterwards we reached Venas.

The first and most conspicuous building in **Venas** (three miles from Valle) is its big white church by the road-side. This church of *S. Marco* affords another illustration of what I have already observed, namely, that the religion of these mountaineers penetrates through and rises above mere external rites and forms. On its façade, above its great portal, are painted these words: "The external temple belongs to God; see that that of the heart is not given to His enemy." "The temple made with hands is pleasing to God, but the temple more pleasing to Him is the heart free from evil." "*Sæpe Dominum ut venerais in templo, fides docet, spes compellit, ut pie sis, charitas ipse clamat.*"

In the church there is a good altar-piece attributed to

Titian. In it the Madonna with clasped hands adores her Infant on her knee, while two angels hold back curtains. On her right stands the Evangelist, St. Mark, with a book in his left hand, and a quill pen in the other, as if in the act of writing his gospel. At his feet is his symbol of the lion. At the Madonna's left hand stand two saints. Ignorant of the true value of this picture, the church authorities in 1864, that is, when Cadore was still under Austria, sold it to a Venetian merchant for a little over sixty pounds. When the Cadorini learned of their loss, they protested against the sale, and were successful in having it cancelled and the picture restored to its place. At a side altar is another pretty picture, of a Madonna with saints, after Titian's school. The church is built out over the steep slope of the valley, on a platform raised to the level of the road ; and from a terrace which runs round the church on the edge of this platform a most splendid view is obtained of the Boite Valley, of the village of Valle, and eastward beyond to the fort of Monte Zucco and the castle of Pieve.

But beautiful though that view is we turned from it to look in another direction, to the little valley that branches off to the south-west, sloping upward to the pass (*forca*) of Mount Sfornioi. It is the valley of the Rite, a torrent that falls into the Boite. It looks silent and solitary, but it was once a busy place, for during the heyday of the Republic of Venice iron mines were worked there, and smelting furnaces lit up the valley at night ; and not only did the mountaineers send down metal to the Arsenal of Venice, but they had foundries where they cast guns and cannons for the Republic. There were several other mines, yielding not only iron, but lead, zinc, and quicksilver. One of them was owned, or leased, by Cristoforo Vecellio, a member of the Titian family. Few traces of these mines now remain, although the site of one can be seen from the Venas road. It is high up the valley, among the bare white slopes of Mount Dubiea. The mines, it is said, are by no means exhausted, but for lack of fuel and because of the difficulty of carriage, it no longer pays to work them.

Among these barren slopes can also be seen small patches of cultivated land, which indicate life somewhere, although not a house is to be seen. The explanation is that a whole village, of over a thousand inhabitants, lies concealed from us on the nearer side of the valley, on its northern slope, thus having a fine southerly aspect. It is the village of **Cibiana**, which has an altitude of 3507 feet, and is distant about six miles from either Venas or from Valle; and from which a mule-path leads one, by the pass of Cibiano and the valley Cervegna, in three or four hours to Zoldo, above Longarone (*see Chap. IV. p. 54*).

Cibiana still preserves a memorial of its past iron industries; only it is no longer ordnance that is cast, but keys that are made. There is no large factory of them in the place, but the peasants, while engaging also in agriculture, occupy their leisure time in forging them in their houses, just as the peasants of many villages in Switzerland take to wood carving. Some families, however, employ workmen, like the brothers Bianchi, whose place we visited, where in winter from fifteen to twenty men are engaged. Upwards of 60,000 keys are exported annually. They are sold without having the wards made, the purchasers, who are chiefly lock-makers, cutting them to suit themselves.

As we were curious to know how the manufactory of keys arose in such a place, I asked the brothers Bianchi, who said that when the mines were stopped one of their family went to Venice to see what could be done. He there found that the Arsenal imported keys from England. He at once offered to make them, and the Republic accepted his offer. He then returned to Cibiana and started this industry, which soon became general throughout the village, and which has remained in his family ever since—upwards of two hundred and fifty years. As iron mines are still worked at Zoldo, which is at no great distance across the Pass of Sfornioi, I naturally thought that the metal for the making of the keys would come from there, and I was not a little surprised to learn that it came from Sweden. Its mode of transport is very



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ON THE WAY TO CORTINA.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calalzo.)



varied. It comes by ship to Genoa, thence by rail to Milan and Belluno, thence by carts to Venas, and thence on the backs of women to Cibiana.

Resuming our journey we passed through Venas, which had little to detain us. Like Tai and some other places it is fast changing its character. Its fine old, interesting, Cadorin houses, with their great heavy wooden stairs, and balconies, and wooden-tiled roofs, that cluster together in irregular groups on the hill-side, are almost concealed by the less picturesque, though perhaps more comfortable, modern stone ones that line either side of the road below. The new houses here are built with Austrian, as in other places they are built with American money, for in winter, when there is no field-work to be done, the men cross the frontier into Austria, where they find work, and are able to save money. One peasant, who had just completed his new house, had put handsome dragon gargoyle to it.

Beyond Venas the Boite Valley narrows, and the great throne of the mountain Pelmo, with its cushion of snow, seemed to shut it in. This was only for a moment, for at the next turn a wide stretch of new country opened out before us, showing the whole of Mounts Pelmo and Rocchetta, and our Boite Valley running away north-west. Then Antelao, as if not to be beaten by his rival, showed his full form and summit, so different in formation from Pelmo's, close at hand on our right, and divided our admiration.

At this point, where the valley is at its narrowest, we saw an obelisk, standing among the grass and young pines on a slope above the road, which bore the following inscription: "On May 9, 10, and 28, 1848, among these rocks, heroically defended, the haughty enemy was broken." This spot, then, was the famous **Chiusa** (shutting), so called because the mountains Rite and Sadorno so approach each other that the valley could here be shut against the advance of an enemy. The valley is narrow still, but before the present road was made, when great jutting rocks were blasted away, it was narrower still, and it is easy to under-

stand how, with towers and chains and fortifications, such as once existed here, it could be made a very strong place of defence. On the above dates a handful of Cadorini successfully checked the advance of well-equipped Austrian and Croatian troops, who, forced to return to Cortina, vented their baffled rage on helpless men, women, and children, whom they came across in their retreat. Old people still speak of that time, and they recounted to us many a tale of cruelty. The old road passed along the face of the cliffs, high above the present one, and traces of it, buttressed up by walls and arches, are still to be seen.

After running the gauntlet of the *Chiusa*, the road turns up a beautifully well-wooded lateral valley, which brought us close under the majestic form of Antelao. Crossing this valley and the torrent that flows down it, the *Ruvinian*, by a lofty bridge, and passing down its other side, we were soon again in the Boite Valley, which, from this point on to the frontier, ten miles away, is called the *Oltrachiusa*, and is wide and open.

We next came to two villages, *Vinigo*, which was high up on a hill-top to the right of the road, and *Peaio*, which was low down on our left. As both of these villages claim to possess in their churches pictures by Titian, we dismounted and visited them.

Vinigo is reached by a long zig-zag road, but it well repays the climb. Its church stands on the brow of the hill, and from the wide open *campo* around it a splendid view is obtained, eastward towards the *Chiusa*, westward up the *Oltrachiusa*, and across the Boite southward up the *Val Farfole*, or Valley of Sprites. The art-treasure of the village, preserved in the church, is an altar-piece by Titian. It represents Christ as a child on His Mother's knee, with His forerunner St. John on the one hand, and His biographer St. John on the other. All are dressed in full-flowing golden-coloured robes, and they are seen against a background of blue sky. There is another very good picture of the Madonna, with St. Antony and St. Margaret. The head of St. Antony is particularly well

painted. Some of the houses of the old Cadore type are worth noticing. They are very strongly built, and have low-arched stone doorways. The hearths are in the centre of the floors, and as there are no chimneys, the smoke, after forming a dense black cloud against the ceiling, gradually finds its way out by doors and windows. The deep glistening blackness of these houses, inside and out, is something astonishing. They look to be the abodes of poverty and misery, but they are not so. The wealth of America has overflowed to enrich them. Vinigo has a population of seven hundred, and of these a hundred and fifty were in America. A young man to whom I spoke, who had just returned with his family after an absence of six years, said that from Venigo they went chiefly to Philadelphia and Pittsburg. They worked in the mines, and they could always save money. They came back at intervals of a few years, and finally almost all come home to remain. During the last twelve years only five men had settled in America, or had died there. Those who do not emigrate supplement their agricultural work by being the tinkers and glaziers of the whole country-side.

Peaio, which lies, as its name seems to denote, along a torrent-bed, has four hundred inhabitants or so, but when we visited it, it was a "deserted village." The young men were in America, the young women in the fields and woods, and only old people and little children were to be seen. Above the door of its church are the words, "Holy Trinity, 1659." Its altar-piece, which represents the Trinity, is claimed to be a Titian, but it is probably only of his school. In the bed of the *Rudan*, the torrent of Peaio, there is a string of old mills, one below the other. They make an interesting, picturesque sight. One is a saw-mill, all the others are meal-mills. While we were standing on the bridge that carries the road across this torrent, a miller told us one of those tales of Croatian barbarity to which I have referred. The Austrians came upon the proprietor of the saw-mill, a certain Giambattista Marchioni, a very old man, and accused

him of carrying arms, because he had in his possession an iron triangular instrument, which is used for sharpening saws. In vain he protested, and explained the use of the piece of iron. They covered him with oil, and, carrying him off to a house close at hand, where there was a large fire burning on the hearth in the middle of the kitchen floor, they roasted him alive, holding him in position above the fire on the points of their spears. His house, the oldest in Peaio, is still shown. We were also told that they murdered the son and daughter of a woman, called Giustina Belfi-Morel, before her eyes, and then compelled her to dig a grave into which they threw the bodies.

Our road had been gradually ascending, so that when we reached **Vodo**, the next village, about six miles from Valle, we had attained the height of 3200 feet above the sea. **Vodo**, like so many of these villages, has an old and a new part. The old part is below the level of the road, so that we looked down upon a curious assemblage of wooden roofs. The new part has sprung up by the road-side. The houses of the former are of the old Cadorin type, those of the latter are more modern-looking stone buildings. We avoided the latter from choice, although, had we been inclined to keep the highway, we could hardly have done so, as the torrents from Antelao had, in their wild race, heaped barricades of sand and stones across it, after filling up their own vaulted passages beneath it. The thoughtlessness of the *Vodese*—as of those of many other communes—in cutting down timber on the mountain side, without replanting, is said to be the cause of these too frequent floodings.

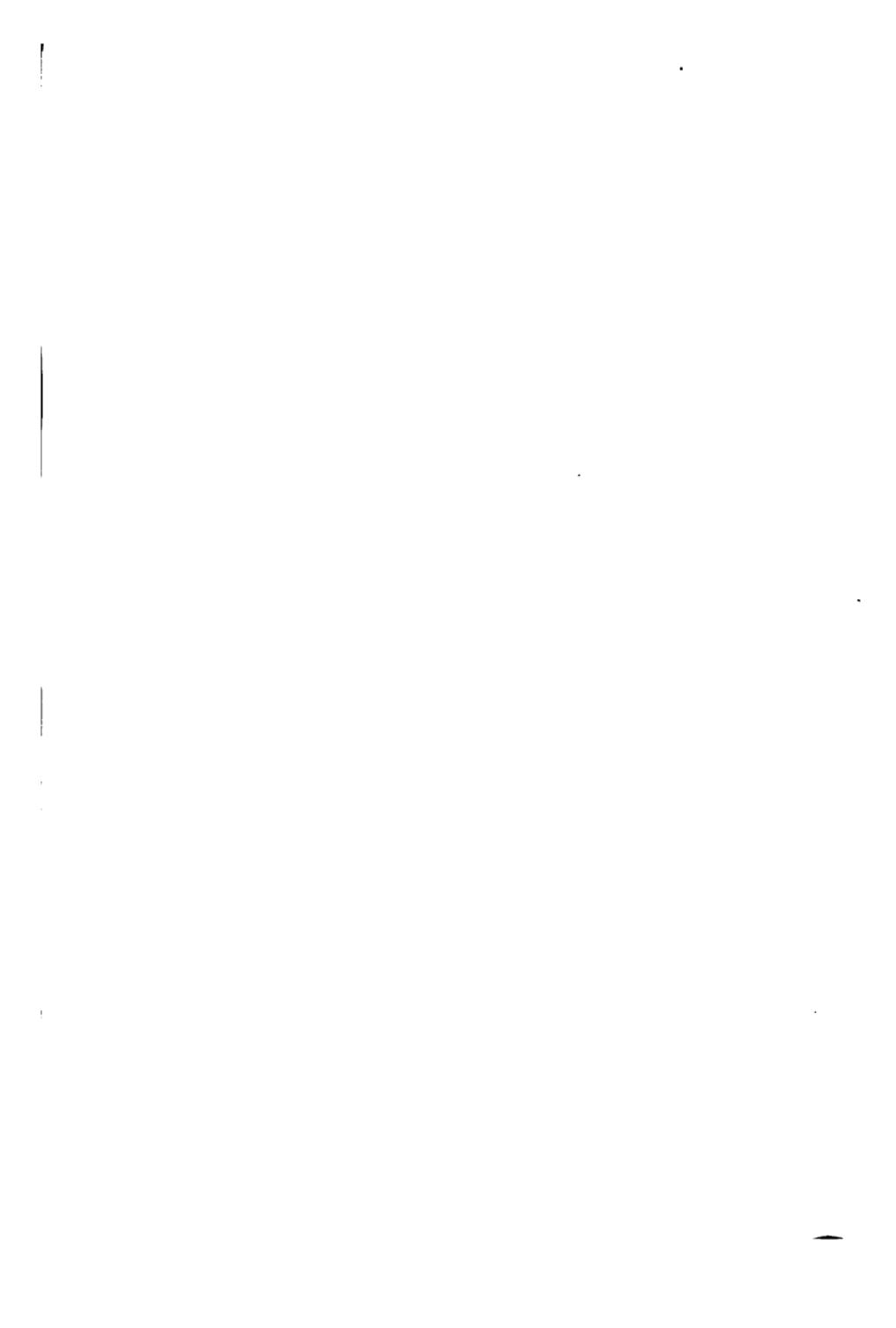
Vodo is a pretty large village, consisting of several *contrade* (sections), each having a special name. Its inhabitants number over fifteen hundred, of which a third find employment in Austria, Germany, and America. The first man who saluted us, did so in English. It does strike one as strange to find peasants in these out-of-the-way mountain villages who talk English, and who sometimes talk it well. This one said that one hundred and fifty people from his village were in the town of Raritan, in the State

of New Jersey, and that all were employed in its woollen-cloth mills. One peculiarity of emigration from this Dolomite region is that each village has in America its own place, to which all its emigrants go, and its own special industry there, which they all follow. Another man who joined us, confirmed what others had said about the mountaineers returning home at intervals, and finally settling in their native place, only, he said, that if they took their children out to America, or if they were born to them there, they generally made America their home. He, himself, had children in New Jersey, whom he could not persuade to return to Vodo with him. In *S. Lucia*, the church of Vodo, there is a good altar-piece by Cesare Vecellio, representing the Madonna and Child seated on a high throne, with the blue sky for a background. Beside her stand *Santa Lucia*, with her eyes on a dish, and *San Gottardo* with his crosier. The Child, like one of the peasant children of Cadore, has a string of red coral round its neck. This church also possesses a beautiful Jerusalem cross of olive-wood, covered with mother-of-pearl, with the stations of the cross marked on it. It stands fully twelve feet high, and was the gift of some pious mountain pilgrim. Above a side door, inside the church, is written: "The Lord keep thy going out and thy coming in."

Vodo, like not a few villages I have already spoken of, has its ancient and illustrious families. Of these I shall only mention one, which has branches in several other parts of Cadore, all of which, like the parent stock, has produced men, and women too, who have left their mark as scientists, writers, agriculturists, teachers, sculptors, and above all as physicians. One belonging to the latter profession was Maria Antonia Talamini, the wife of Giannantonio Talamini. Her husband was a famous physician and surgeon who took his medical degrees first at Innsbruck, then at Padua, and lastly at the then famous college of *San Giacomo dell' Orio*, in Venice. This was in 1771. Returning to Vodo, he married a half-cousin, and after ten years of busy professional life he died, leaving her a

widow, with a young family. She had picked up not a little medical knowledge, and had, indeed, helped her husband on busy days, and towards the end became a sort of colleague to him in his work, and now she took upon herself all his duties. The people had confidence in her, and for ten years, from 1781 to 1791, she acted as one of the leading doctors in Cadore. Then a phlebotomist of Peaio, in a fit of professional jealousy, complained of her to the Council of Ten, Venice, as exercising the profession of a doctor without a diploma. Summoned to Venice by the Council, she was, in accordance with the laws of the Republic on this matter, lodged in prison. Her case was then debated, and it was resolved in the first place to hand her over to the college of *San Giacomo dell' Orio* for examination. Subjected there to the usual examinations in medicine and surgery, she acquitted herself so well that the examiners unanimously granted her a diploma. The Council of Ten forgave her her past breach of the law, and set her at liberty to return with honour to her village to pursue her profession. Meanwhile she had been training her son in medicine, and so, in 1806, fifteen years later, we find the son the medical colleague of his mother, as she had been of her husband. The son died in 1871, so the professional career of father, mother, and son covered exactly one hundred years. Another member of this family, Giacomo Talamini, who was the priest of Vodo during the latter half of the eighteenth century, was the first to introduce the potato into Cadore. In doing so he had to overcome tremendous prejudice, and it was only by persistent cultivation of it himself, and speaking, writing, preaching, and lecturing about it, that he succeeded in his efforts. It is said that the potato supplies one-sixth of the food of the human family; I am sure it more than sustains that percentage in the food of Cadore.

The Boite Valley beyond Vodo is more open, and there are stretches of cultivated land between the mountains and the river. Though less romantic than the parts we had passed, it was yet redeemed from being commonplace by



To face p. 161.

VILLAGE OF BORCA.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calatzo.)



the giant forms of Antelao and Pelmo that rose majestically on our right and left. Very soon, however, we came to a part of the valley, over three miles in extent, which might well be named the "Valley of Destruction," because here at different times whole masses of rock have fallen from Antelao, and, becoming rivers of stones, have rolled their desolating floods over fertile fields and gardens, over homesteads and villages, burying them and their inhabitants out of sight for ever. Other villages have risen on their ruins, but the appearance of the country witnesses to these past disasters, and the more recent ones are still fresh in the minds of the people.

The small village of Cancia, which we now passed through, is built over a buried village. In 1868, a river of mud and stone from Antelao, a *boa*, as it is called, buried thirteen houses and twelve people. It happened during the night of the 27th of July, after several days and nights of excessive rain. A man, called Giovanni Andreotta, who happened to be on the mountain-side above Cancia, saw the coming danger, and, rushing to his home through the village, gave the alarm, crying, "Save yourselves who can." Many thus warned by him escaped. He reached his own home to find his wife and his two children in bed. Rousing them, and he taking one child and his wife the other, they rushed into the night. It was too late. The mud and stones of the *boa* gathered round them, and, holding them tighter and tighter in its deadly grip, slowly enveloped them. In the morning the howling of their dog, over what had proved their living grave, attracted the people. Nothing could entice it from the spot, or quiet its grief. With spade and pick-axe the place was cleared, and there, standing upright, were the bodies of Andreotta and his wife, each with a dead child in their cold arms. From another house that was standing, buried almost up to the roof in the river of stones, despairing cries for help were heard to come. The villagers cleared a window, when they saw a mother and daughter with their heads almost pressed against the ceiling. The *boa* had entered door

and windows, surprising them and cutting off all escape. As it rose inside their house they managed to rise with it, keeping their heads and shoulders above the slime, until at last rescue came.

Immediately beyond Cancia is **Borca**, which has also suffered not less severely from landslips. The name in the old manuscripts is written *Beforca*, *Beorca*, and so, whilst it may be from *bifurca* (two-forked), its use in other parts of Cadore seems to point to a derivation indicative of the shifting, moving, hanging nature of the soil. It was overwhelmed in 1729, and again in 1737, when, as wrote an eye-witness : "In little more than a minute, these poor people were deprived of their houses, gardens, fields, pasture-land, church, and cemetery ; and were left without food and without clothing." But one of the most dreadful landslips that ever happened in Cadore occurred here within the memory of not a few of its inhabitants. On April 21, 1814, about noon, when the people were all in their houses for their midday meal, and to shelter themselves from a tempest of rain that had come suddenly upon them, a whole slice of Antelao fell without warning. It created a river of stones half-a-mile broad, and in some places a hundred feet deep. This river flowed down the mountain-side, swept away a part of Borca, crossed the Boite, stopping the flow of the river for twenty-four hours, and mounting the slopes of the other side of the valley, wiped out of existence two villages, *Marceana* and *Taulen*, burying alive in their homes two hundred and fifty-seven out of their united three hundred and nineteen inhabitants. Sixty-two people only escaped ; every family, save two, had to mourn its dead, and sixteen families were extinguished for ever. The row of white houses seen across the river from Borca is called *Villanova* (the New Village), and it marks the place where Marceana and Taulen lie buried.

Borca has many interesting reminiscences. Here lived at the close of last century and at the beginning of this, one Don Tomaso de Luca, a priest of the old school, of good family, cultured and learned, and possessed of one of the

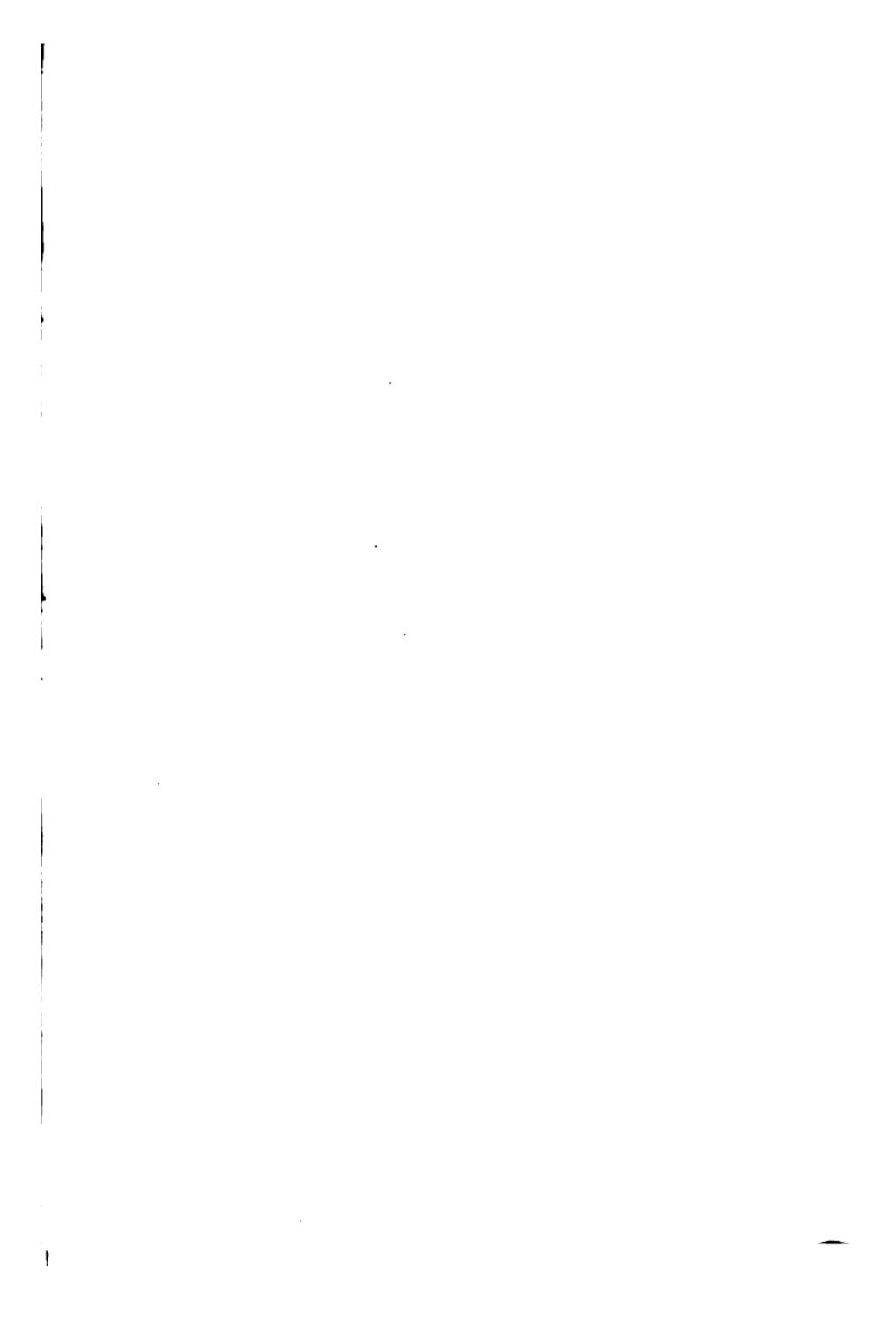
finest libraries in all Northern Italy. It contained hundreds of the Aldine classics, the only complete set known to exist of the Cominiana classics, which were published in Padua last century, two hundred and sixty precious manuscripts, many of which had miniatures by Titian, Bellini, Paolo Veronese, and other old masters, and a copy of the *Biblia Pauperum*, or "Bible of the Poor," which, as is well known, is one of the most ancient and most rare of xylographic works—books whose leaves are printed on one side only from wooden blocks. It was issued about 1420, and consists of forty plates, each having in its centre a picture representing a historic fact in Christ's life, beside which are two others of Old Testament scenes or facts, which receive in it their fulfilment; that is, there are the types and the antitypes. In the four corners of each leaf there is a bust, the two top ones being always Old Testament prophets. Between the historic pictures and the busts are passages of Scripture, and Leonine rhymes. After some searching about in Borca we discovered Don Tomaso's house. On entering its open door we found a poor woman with her children sitting round the kitchen fire eating their midday meal of *polenta*. She said that her husband's father, who was the priest's heir, or one of his heirs, sold off the library almost for nothing, and a neighbour who stood by added, "and the money that it fetched was soon eaten up." They were much surprised to learn that a copy of a work which Don Tomaso de Luca had possessed, the *Biblia Pauperum*, had lately been sold in Rome to a Jew for 2500 fr., who went straight to England with it, and sold it to the Rylands' Library, Manchester, for a much larger sum. It may even have been the Borca copy! I believe, however, that a large part, and the most valuable part, of the Borca Library found its way to England, even during the life-time of its owner. For in 1816 Don Tomaso published in Venice a catalogue of his books. This attracted the notice of literary men, and an Englishman went to Borca, and arranged to buy it up for 600,000 fr. (£24,000). He paid an instalment of 160,000 fr. (£6400), and took with

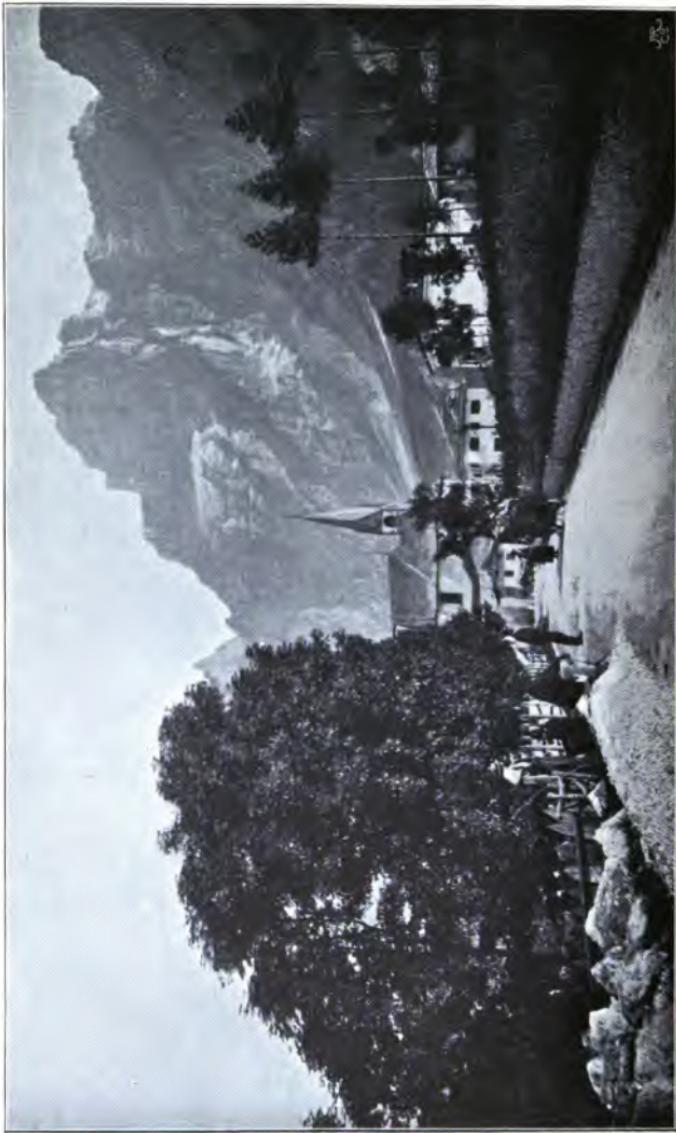
him a selection of books and manuscripts to that amount. He soon afterwards died, and his son offered to complete the purchase, but Don Tomaso's old love for his books had returned, helped perhaps by public opinion which wished him to retain it, and so the bargain was cancelled. Borca and Cadore possessed this broken, but still precious library for another quarter of a century, when it was taken to Mestre. There the St. Mark's Library, Venice, secured a few of its books, and then the remainder was sold to a merchant of Padua for 6250 fr. (£250).

A second old house of interest was that in which had lived Don Natale Talamini, another famous member of the Vodo family of that name. He was born in the little village of *Pescul*, on the slopes of Mount Pelmo, in 1808, and was educated for the priesthood at Udine, where he became a professor of Oriental languages. In 1846 he was sent to Venice as a professor of *Belles Lettres*. When, in 1848, the war of independence was proclaimed, he enrolled himself under Daniel Manin. He was taken prisoner by the Austrians, and imprisoned first in San Severo, and then at Legnago. Regaining his liberty, he never ceased by tongue and pen, by poem, pamphlet, and eloquent discourse, to keep alive, and to inflame in the hearts of his countrymen the love of freedom, and when at last Italy's

“ . . . dreams were done,
And she herself had wakened into life,
And stood full-armed and free,”

he was the first, elected by the suffrages of a grateful people, who took his seat as member for Cadore in the Parliament of United Italy. Natale Talamini thus takes his place amongst those noble, liberal, enthusiastic, patriotic priests that Italy produces from time to time. During the last years of his life he lived at Borca, beloved by all, but looked askance at by the Church. Latterly his patriotism showed itself in an expressive way. Every morning at sunrise, he climbed to the top of the *Nass de Crepa*, a hill behind his house, and, looking towards the east, he raised





VILLAGE OF S. VITO, WITH MOUNT MALCORA.
(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Catalzo.)

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his hands and blessed Cadore; looking southward he blessed Italy; to Pelmo, he took off his hat and prayed for his native village of Pescul; then, glancing westward towards Cortina (which forsook Italy for Austria), he turned his back on it, and, with a gesture of supreme contempt, fled rapidly home down the mountain-side.

Borca, in spite of all its disasters, is in a flourishing condition. It has some 800 inhabitants, who have little or no taxes to pay, for the commune has a good annual income from its woods and pasture-lands, and instead of a public debt has a balance of 150,000 fr. (£6000) on the right side. It once owned iron mines across the Boite, but these have been closed from want of fuel. Two or three hundred of its inhabitants seek work in other lands, almost all being engaged in one way or another upon railways.

Leaving Borca we crossed the main part of the great river of stones that wrought such havoc in 1814. It is, as I have said, one glaring sheet of white, half-a-mile broad. The road is cut through it, and the broken dolomite forms a wall on the right hand and on the left. Below at the bottom of the valley the river flows between banks of it. Leaving our carriage we climbed to some height above the road, gathering specimens of dolomite, but the heat and glare, combined with the rough footing, made the work exhausting. It was a relief to get away from this wild waste, and into a natural part of the valley again. The change was the more striking and grateful, for almost immediately beyond it, by the road-side, is the chapel of *S. Canziano*. It was to us an oasis in the desert. There were green hillocks all around bordered with pine-trees, and to add to the quiet beauty of the scene, over a hundred cattle, returning home from the mountains, with their tinkling bells slung to their necks, were resting or feeding in the cool shade. The men in charge of them told us that they were travelling to Belluno from the high Alps, to which they had taken their cattle last June, three months before, and that they had already been three days

on the way. About the first or second week in September the very high feeding-grounds are deserted before a fall of snow makes the descent dangerous or impossible.

The north-west side of Antelao, with numberless cones of rock, and fallen dolomite heaped around them, now came in sight. Beyond it were the giant peaks of Marcora and Sorapiss that flank Antelao to the north. The colour of these mountains is exceedingly beautiful. Where the rocks have fallen off they are of a delicate salmon tint, deepening into red; where the peaks are unbroken they are of a soft greyish hue, without any harshness or hardness, as if seen through a veil of mist. We now had a little respite from *boa*-rivers, and soon after reached the village of San Vito.

San Vito

(San Vito; from Valle 10 miles, from Cortina 6½ miles.
Height above sea-level 3500 ft.

Inns—*Antelao* and *Italia* (suitable for Alpinists). Mountain path by *Forcella Piccola*, and between *Bel Prà* and *Marmarole* on the north, and *Antelao* on the south, in 6 hours to *Calalzo* and *Pieve*. A path also leads from here to *Forno di Zoldo*, 8 hours.)

San Vito is a long straggling village, having on either side of it a tolerably wide stretch of cultivated land. At its further end, two churches, an old and a new, attracted our attention. In the latter we saw an altar-piece bearing the name of Francesco Vecellio, Titian's elder brother. It is his best work, and we are told that Titian admired it greatly, and that it even excited in him a feeling of jealousy of his brother's powers. But that it is signed, it would certainly pass for a Titian. It was painted to the order of the priest of San Vito, a certain Don Pietro Costantini, who appears in the picture as being presented by the patron saint of the village, St. Vitus, to Christ, who smiles upon him from the arms of his mother. In this church there is also a chalice, bearing the date 1114, which is supposed to be the year of the foundation of the ancient church.

The other and older church we found to be in many respects the more interesting. It is a Gothic structure of the year 1512. It was built as a votive offering, and so bears the name common to such churches in this region, *La Difesa* (the Defence). Its apse has a finely groined roof, which, like the walls, is covered with frescoes. These, unfortunately, are in such a bad state of preservation that they can only in part be deciphered. The four Evangelists with their symbols are visible. There is also a fresco that has a local traditional, if not a historical, interest. It represents two battle-scenes. In the first the Madonna, with the Child, is seen among the soldiers, brandishing a large sword; in the second St. Vitus appears among the generals on horseback. One tradition says that in 1508, when the soldiers of Maximilian threatened to destroy the village, the Madonna interfered, and so confounded them that, as happened in the Old Testament times with the enemies of the children of Israel, each man's sword was turned against his fellow. According to tradition this was effected by the appearance of the patron saint of San Vito. This village, like Borca, is in a flourishing state financially, having an income from its woods and pasture-lands sufficient for the keeping up of its public works, with the help of the interest of a capital, the result of the savings of past years, that amounts to some 30,000 fr. (£12,000). San Vito is still a picturesque village, but the makers of the highway that passes through it are nevertheless responsible for a gross piece of vandalism. They have left some trees growing around the *piazza*, but the tree that was the glory of the place has gone, felled by their ruthless axes. It was a grand old lime, beneath whose shade the Communal Council had held its meetings from the fourteenth century downwards. This, too, was the tree that appears between the two towers in the arms of Cadore, because the place where it grew was half-way between the castles of Pieve and Botestagna, which these towers represent. In the village archives there are twelfth-century parchments—the oldest in Cadore. After quitting San Vito our road

ran for about three-fourths of a mile between enormous masses of rock, the remains of terrible *frana* (falls), and then through more of those glaring white rivers of stones, rising in the midst of which, on our left, below the road, is the little village of Chiapizza.

Chiapizza

(Mountain path by *Forcella Grande* (7750 feet), thence by Bel Prà, and Marmarole on the south, and Croda Marcora and the Sorapiss on the north, in six hours to the Forest of S. Marco.)

Pine-trees that are in a flourishing condition among the masses of fallen rocks, and others of a somewhat stunted growth that have taken root amongst the broken stones of the *boa*-rivers around **Chiapizza**, showed us that the disasters mentioned above were not of recent date. From history we learn that they happened in 1730 and 1774. The one of 1730 covered nearly half a square mile, and completely obliterated every trace of the village of Chiapizza, destroying two-thirds, one chronicler says all, of its unhappy inhabitants. In connection with this disaster, we are told that the people of San Vito saw that a part of the mountain above Chiapizza was about to fall, and rushed off to warn its inhabitants. They took the warning and left their homes, but, as the disaster did not immediately come, they returned to them. Not once, but several times this was repeated. It was the old story of the wolf. All sense of danger passed away. But the rent in the cliff was steadily widening, and at last on the morning of May 2, 1730, the priest of San Vito saw the rent gaping and the rock trembling. He rushed off to Chiapizza, raised the alarm, and, never stopping in his race, turned and fled back to San Vito. A sense of false security had however taken possession of the Chiapizza people, and they refused to stir. The priest had scarcely re-entered San Vito when the disaster occurred. The whole side of the mountain fell with

a thunder-crash that echoed through all the valley, and then all was silence. Chiapizza, like Marceana and Taulen, was buried out of sight for ever. Standing solitarily amongst the rocks, and looking so much older than the Chiapizza of to-day, is the little chapel of S. Floriano. It is supposed to have originally served as the parish church of this village and of Borca, which would carry its foundation back to the year 1000. Like all the old churches in Cadore, its walls were once covered with precious Christian frescoes, of which only a few traces now remain.

Leaving Chiapizza our road lay through a lovely pine-wood, which crept on our right hand up amongst the *bo-torrents* of the rugged Marcora, and on our left sloped gently down to the rushing waters of the Boite. All was beauty and peacefulness, and it took an effort to realise that here opened, on May 2, 1848, the campaign by which at last Cadore passed from under Austrian rule. Before the battle began, the Austrian general sought an interview with the Cadorini. General Galeazzi met him as their spokesman. A general pardon was offered if they would lay down their arms. General Galeazzi spurned the idea. The Austrian asked why all the bells of the villages were ringing? "*O la nostra, o la vostra agonia,*" was the answer—"Either our death agony, or yours." There was an end to parley, and the battle opened. The Cadorini were posted on the *Col della Sentinella* (the Hill of the Sentinel), and amongst the rocks and crags of the Marcora, while the Austrians were crowded together in the valley below. Every volley from the Cadorini took effect, whilst the Austrian bullets were flattened against the rocky targets of the mountaineers. Soon the Austrians beat a retreat pursued by the Cadorini, whose deadly fire they only escaped when they were once more ensconced in their trenches at Acquabona, beyond the frontier, near Cortina.

In the midst of our lovely pine-wood, which was about four miles in extent, we came to the **Italian and Austrian Frontiers**, $12\frac{3}{4}$ miles from Valle, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Cortina. At the beginning of a short bend in the road were poles

painted red, white, and green, from one of which floated the Italian colours, and at the other end of the bend were poles striped black and yellow, the colours of Austria. On the Italian side there was an obelisk with an inscription commemorative of the battle of Chiapizza, which was as follows : " 1848-2 Maggio—Cadore—Invasori—Ributto." A *boa* had occurred here, which, unlike those we had passed, was of red stones, and the *Boite* at this part flows between red banks.

As we emerged from the wood we came to **Acquabona** (good water), about two miles from Cortina. Here is the Austrian custom-house for the examination of goods and passengers' luggage coming from Italy. We had therefore to call a halt, but we were detained only a few minutes, as a peep into one trunk, and the answers we were able to give to the usual questions about *sigari e tabacchi* seemed to satisfy the courteous *dognieri*. At Acquabona there were but a few houses and an inn, but their appearance, and that of their inhabitants, were sufficient to show us that we were no longer in Italy. The people had quite a different look. The slender, straight, and generally tall Italian had disappeared, and his place was taken by the short, stout, and more robust-looking Austrian. The difference was most marked in the women. The handsome, lithe, graceful Italian, dressed lightly and flowingly, gave place to a humpty-dumpty creature, in short, heavy petticoats, and a little black hat, which she most respectfully touched when saluting us as we passed on our way. Acquabona, as we have seen, was the place where the Austrians had their trenches in 1848, to which they retreated after their defeat at Chiapizza.

Our road had been steadily, though very gently, rising ever since we left Valle, and we had now come up about 1000 feet. From Acquabona it seemed to mount more rapidly to **Zuel**, or Zovelle, so named from Zeus (Jove), to whom there is supposed to have been an altar at this spot. Passing through this our first Austrian village, we slowly ascended a steep part of the road. From its summit we looked across a great open country of cultivated land,

bordered by pine-woods, huge mountains of fantastic forms and lovely colouring, that, circling round and round, seemed to close in the valley ; and in the midst of this green amphitheatre lay, basking in the evening sunlight, the favourite resort of English tourists and of Alpine climbers, and the goal of our day's journey—*Cortina*.

CHAPTER XI

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO

(Distant from Italian frontier $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Height above sea-level 4114 feet. Nearest railway stations—Toblach, $19\frac{1}{2}$ miles; Belluno, $47\frac{1}{2}$ miles; Vittorio, $60\frac{2}{3}$ miles; Carnia, $71\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Hotels—*Faloria* and *Stella d'Oro* (English houses, pension $3\frac{1}{2}$ — $4\frac{1}{2}$ flor.); *Cortina, Croce Bianca, Cavallino, Aquila Nera* (pension 3—4 flor.). Private apartments to be had.

Post and telegraph office. Postal Diligence leaves for Toblach daily at 7 A.M. and 3 P.M., arriving at 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., fare 2 florins. In the season pleasure diligences also run. Direct through communication with Venice; diligence leaves daily 6 A.M., arriving at Belluno 4 P.M.; train 6.25 P.M., arriving at Venice 10.27. Italian and German spoken. Italian money taken, but all prices calculated in Austrian currency. Seat of the Ampezzo section of the Alpine Club. Good centre for excursions and ascensions. List of guides and tariff at Club, and Hotels. See also Appendix.)

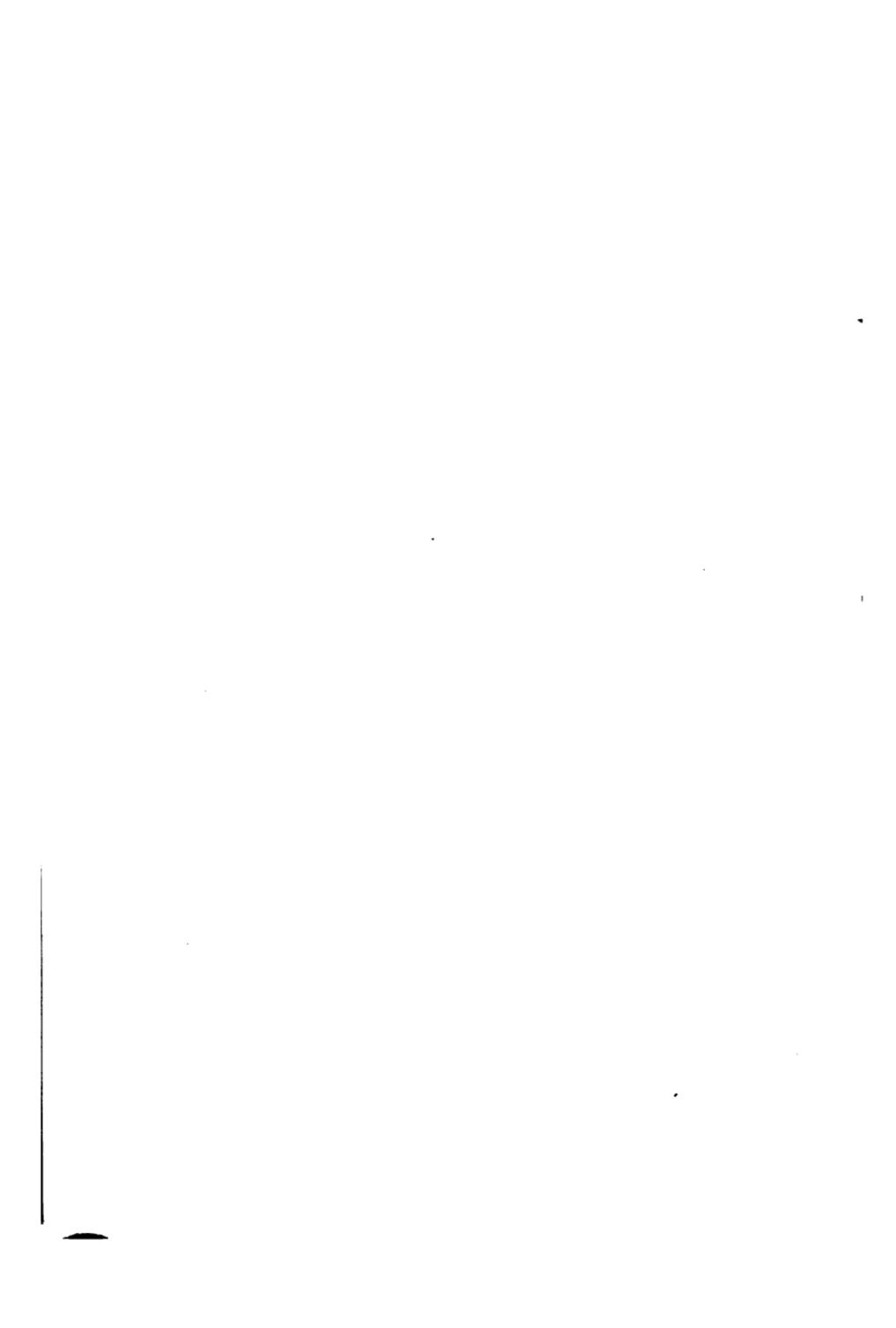
A COAT-OF-ARMS consisting of a tower between two trees, above which soars a two-headed eagle, reminded us, before we had yet crossed the threshold of our hotel to explore Cortina, that we were no longer in the Italian, but in the Austrian Tyrol. And yet the words inscribed around the emblem, *Magnifica Comunita Ampezzo*, showed that this had not always been Austrian territory, but, like the rest of the valley of the Boite, had once belonged to Italy, the frontier of which now stopped at an imaginary line drawn across it about four miles eastward. The fact is, that for over a thousand years it had been Italian. From 476 till 1421 it formed a *centuria* of the Republic of Cadore; and in 1421, when Cadore merged itself into Venice, it became, like the rest of this region, a faithful ally of the greater Republic.



To face p. 172.

CORTINA.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calalzo.)



It was at this time that the Doge and Senate, always magnanimous in their treatment of allies and dependencies, bestowed upon it the distinction so proudly emblazoned on its arms, "The Magnificent Commune of Ampezzo." But in 1511, during the wars of Venice with Austria, the Valley of Ampezzo, unlike the rest of Cadore, declared for the enemy, and in 1518 it was formally united to the Pusterthal. Then arose the proverb, still current in Cadore, "*Cadore fedel. Ampezzo rubel*" (Cadore faithful, Ampezzo rebellious). In 1797, when the treaty of *Campo Fornio* was signed, Napoleon Bonaparte allowed Austria to retain possession of it, but having in 1805 created his Kingdom of Italy, in 1810 he added Ampezzo to it as part of the "Department of the Piave." In 1813, on the decline of Napoleon's power, Austria again regained possession of it. In 1866, when, after the battles of Custoza and Sadowa, Austria was compelled to hand over Venetia to Italy, Ampezzo was foolishly retained, to perpetuate as part of "Unredeemed Italy" a chronic state of friction.

Cortina has gained and lost by its connection with Austria. It has gained the peace and prosperity of a country that has no history, but it has lost the strength and self-reliance born of the struggle for life and liberty. While Cadore has continued down the centuries to produce patriots, the record of whose exploits in song and history kindle in the hearts of her children to-day a noble ambition, Cortina since 1511 has produced no hero and no actions worthy of renown. Its people are subjects of Austria, but they are not citizens. Indeed, as the syndic of Cortina said to us, "In all the Austrian Tyrol there are not five thousand persons who know how they are governed, and in Cortina there are not ten."

Perhaps this freedom from political turmoil has had its influence in making Cortina one of the most frequented places of resort in the Dolomites. A glance at the town was sufficient to show us that it had far more accommodation for foreigners than for natives. It has seven large hotels, capable of receiving about a thousand travellers,

while it has but seventy private houses, and the greater number of these are let as "apartments." Cortina has less than a thousand inhabitants, but it has over sixteen thousand visitors annually. Of these, ten thousand are merely passers-by, "wayfaring men who tarry but for a night," while the remaining six thousand spend from one week to two months in the place. The former are for the most part Germans; the latter are chiefly English and Americans.

But Cortina must have other attractions than that of a place with no history in order to draw such crowds of tourists, and these are neither small nor few. They are found in its position, its climate, its industries, its home life, in the many delightful walks and excursions to be had around it, and in its being a good centre for Alpine climbing. Of course the prosperity of Cortina depends on tourists, and the Government, Municipality, and people all unite in adding to the comfort of their guests, but beyond receiving material profit, Cortina receives through them benefits of a higher kind, and I was particularly gratified, when calling upon the syndic, to hear him say: "You English have not only brought money into the valley, but culture and morality."

Cortina lies in the centre of a large open *conca*, or basin, the sides of which are green wood-covered slopes, behind which rise lofty dolomite peaks, whose fantastic shapes and rich colouring and changeful aspects are a constant source of interest. Its height above the sea-level is 4114 feet, so that its climate in summer is clear and dry, crisp and bracing. There is, however, a lack of shade in its immediate neighbourhood, so that it is often uncomfortably hot in August. It is a healthy place, in proof of which we were told the scourge of cholera has never visited it, and that no epidemic ever secures in it a footing. Of its thousand or so inhabitants there were nearly fifty in 1895 above eighty years of age. Through the centre of the *conca* flows the Boite, on the left bank of which stands Cortina. It consists mainly of one street, *Reichstrasse*, in

which are the chief houses and shops, and all the hotels, excepting the *Faloria*, which is on the sunny slopes of the hill of that name, at a short distance east of the town. Opening off this street near its centre is a small, clear space, with the post and telegraph offices on one side and the Municipality on the other, which may be called the *forum* of the village, and immediately below is a much larger open space, called the *Kirchen Platz*, which surrounds the parish church of *S. Filipo and S. Giacomo*, and which is used as the market-place. The rather steeply sloping ground between this space and the river is laid out as a public garden, and is dignified with the name of the *parco*. It is well arranged, with winding walks and shady seats, and is now being enlarged.

The parish church is a large structure built in 1777, and contains little of real value. The best thing in it is the high altar in wood, elaborately carved by Andrea Brustolon. It is crowned by a figure of the Redeemer, and on the bases of its four main columns are the symbols of the Evangelists. On the door of the tabernacle is a *Pieta*, and the whole is dotted over with a number of what Mr. Ruskin would call "upholsterers' angels." There are three frescoes on the church ceiling by the native painter Ghedina: "Christ Purifying the Temple," "The Martyrdom of St. Philip," and "The Beheading of St. James." The campanile was not built till 1858. It is 256 feet high—nearly equal to that of St. Mark's in Venice, of which it is an imitation. From its summit there is a splendid view, and it is worth the ascent. As at San Vito, so also here there is a church of the *Difesa*. It is at the east end of Cortina, and the legend goes that when in 780 the Longobards threatened to sack Lacedelle, a village across the river, a mist came suddenly down and enveloped them, so that, mistaking friend for foe, they destroyed each other. The church, however, we found, was a comparatively modern one, built in honour of the Madonna, who is now credited with having sent the mist. A fresco on the roof, poor in conception, execution, and

colour, embodies this modern version of the legend. In the choir are two stained-glass windows, representing the Annunciation, with the arms of Cortina.

As the town was burnt to the ground by the French in 1809, there are no buildings that call for special remark, except, perhaps, the house of the proprietor of the *Albergo Aquila Nera*, which is adorned with frescoes by his brothers, the late Giuseppe and Luigi Ghedina. These symbolize human life from childhood to old age. The painter's conception of the former is that of boys on a *slitte* (sleigh) gliding down a snow-covered hill-side, and of the latter a patriarch sitting solitarily in his bedroom.

The people of Cortina are musical, and a guitar is to be found in every house. The young men often stroll in companies along the roads of an evening, playing and singing as they go. Although stolid-looking, the *Cortinese* have a sense of humour. On the eves of the festivals of the Ascension, Pentecost, Trinity, and of St. Philip and St. James, the youths climb at sunset the neighbouring hills, where they kindle fires, and by the aid of speaking-trumpets, which are used in all this mountain region, proclaim the "banns" of fictitious marriages between most incongruous persons. They describe the presents they are to receive, giving scientific works to an ignorant man, and books of devotion to a freethinker. The people in the town applaud according to the ingenuity displayed in making absurd combinations.

The women when not at work are all dressed in black, of very thick material, even in the summer, and the only bit of colour about them are their aprons. They wear little low round black felt hats, trimmed with black ribbon, the ends of which dangle down behind. Their mode of salutation, as I observed in the last chapter, is very quaint. They touch their hats like men. The elder women never fail to do it, though we noticed that some of the younger ones are unfortunately beginning to drop the custom. On entering a church they take off their hats and place them on the book-board in front of where they are seated, and

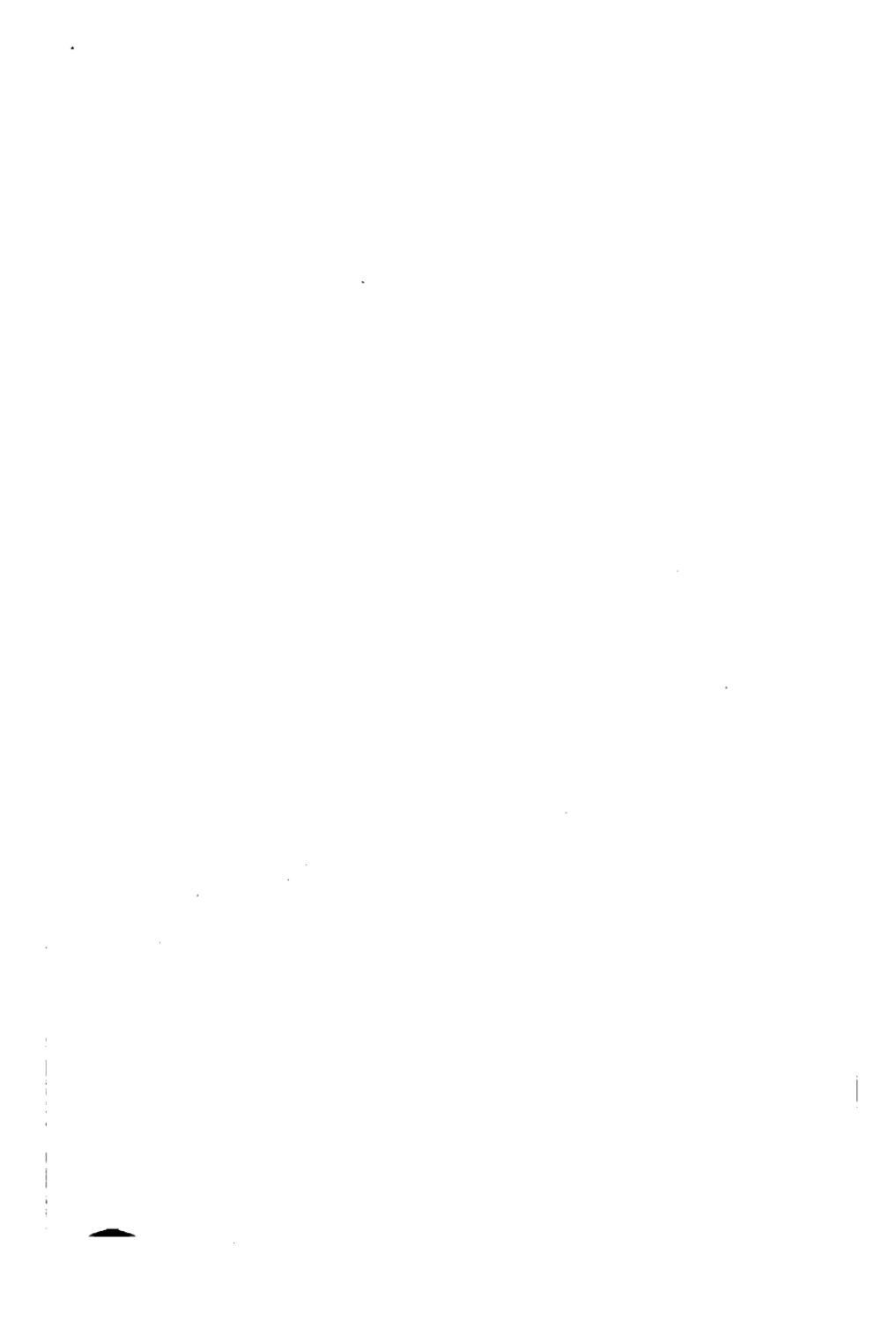


To face p. 176.

MOUNT PELMO.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calalzo.)





on leaving they carry them in their hands till well outside the door. They are very industrious, and, as in Italy, do most of the field work, though they get more help from the men than do their Italian sisters. One day when I was taking shelter from the rain in a farm-house, a person entered, dressed in a highland cloak, a coat, waistcoat, slouch hat, and strong nailed boots; I naturally thought it was a man; but when the cloak was thrown off petticoats were disclosed soaked with rain to the wearer's knees. It was the farmer's buxom daughter, who had been at *Monte Rosà* to look after the horses. She told me she had been away since six in the morning—and it was now late in the afternoon—and that it was a three hours' walk each way.

The men are intelligent, and remarkably ingenious. When farm duties do not occupy them they work in wood and metal. They do all kinds of carpentry, almost every family making its own furniture and agricultural implements. They manufacture locks and keys, hinges, scissors, knives, clocks, and fire-arms, though the only watchmaker we could find in Cortina was a woman! They are also employed in finer work, such as wood-carving, wood and metal mosaic, poker-drawing, and gold and silver filigree. Were it not for these industrial resources they would have to go *a spasso* in America, as they do from the Italian parts of these mountains, because the produce of the fields barely affords sustenance for a third of the year.

There are two Government industrial schools in Cortina, one to teach boys to do mosaic-work in wood and metal, the other to teach boys and girls silver filigree-work. The former was established in 1873, through the painter Luigi Ghedina having shown at the exhibition held in Vienna that year, an inlaid table made at Cortina. Boys are allowed to enter at the age of thirteen, when they leave the elementary schools, and a four years' course is obligatory to secure a diploma. Austrian boys only pay a florin of entry money, all others are charged 50 florins a year. They are well instructed in their trades, both theoretically

and practically. The schools are well attended, as the old Jewish rule seems to hold here that every man should know a trade, and every woman, too, when it is possible.

An interesting fact connected with the metal mosaic-work is that it was introduced by an Englishman, John G. T. Coddington, C.E., who had seen it in Manipur, in the North-West Provinces of India. It is called *Tarkashi* work, and in a letter to Signor Lacedelli, the director of the school, dated August 20, 1881, Mr. Coddington expresses his approval of specimens made at Cortina, and urges its being taken up, as owing to plates having been sent to the South Kensington Museum, and the Prince of Wales having admired it when in India, a demand for it had sprung up in England. The metal, cut into thin strips and sharpened at the edges, is beaten into incisions in the wood. Seeing no salesman for the goods, we asked how they were disposed of. The director explained that all the articles made in the schools, and also those made by former pupils in their houses, were sold in one of the rooms of the public school, where a committee of teachers fixed the prices. The monopoly thus created may be good for the seller, but it puts the buyers, who are mainly English and Americans, at their mercy, although the prices did not seem exorbitant. About 6000 florins' (£600) worth of work made in the schools is sold annually, and from 30,000 florins to 40,000 florins' (£3000 to £4000) worth of work made by former pupils.

The Silver Filigree School, which another member of the Ghedina family founded, has two departments, one for boys and one for girls. We saw the silver drawn out into thin threads and worked by the pupils, by means of pincers, into the forms of leaves, flowers, and fanciful shapes. One daisy had its golden centre composed of 600 little round balls of thread, while the silver border of nine leaves contained twenty threads each. A little box had from five to six thousand tiny silver beads arranged in rows and soldered with silver upon it. It is, thus, work that requires much skill and patience, more, it seems to me, than its paltry nature merits. The scholars at this school pay nothing,





To face p. 179.

MOUNT SORAPIS.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Caltalzo)



but they also earn nothing for the first three years. After that they earn from half a florin to two florins a day. About 10,000 florins' (£1000) worth of filigree is sold annually. Sometimes pupils go forth from these schools into the world to push their fortunes, but the majority settle down within sight of their own chimney smoke, so that Cortina is becoming more and more an industrial centre.

But the industries of Cortina, however interesting in themselves and beneficial to the natives, rarely claim the attention of visitors, except on wet days, when they cannot comfortably make any of the numerous walks and excursions which are the great attractions of the place, and some of these I must now describe.

EXCURSIONS

Monte Crepa, with intervening villages— Lacedelle and Gillardon

Opposite Cortina, across the Boite, at no great distance, is seen what seems to be a great isolated rock with a precipitous face towards the town. It is **Monte Crepa**, the summit of which, 1070 feet above Cortina, is called *Belvedere*, because of the splendid view it commands. A climb or walk to this lofty outlook, which it takes from an hour to an hour and a half to accomplish, is generally one of the first pleasures a visitor sets himself to obtain. I have said a climb or walk, for one can ascend the Crepa either way—he can either climb its steep face, or obtain in this, as in most other things, an easier victory by taking it on the flank. Although the Crepa looks isolated, it is really an enormous projecting buttress, or rather bracket, standing out from a green hill-side, up which one may go till he steps on to Crepa's level summit. We found the way thither, as well as the place itself, full of interest. Passing down through the

parco, and across the river, our walk brought us in twenty minutes to **Lacedelle**, which had already come before us in connection with the *Difesa* miracle. The inhabitants of this village appear to have profited by their peril, and wisely resolved to protect themselves, for they have for centuries enjoyed a reputation for the manufacture of fire-arms. Lacedelle is the name of the family in whose blood gun-making seems to run. We found the house of Alessandro Lacedelle, the representative of the family. He was absent, but we were shown into his bedroom, while some one went to fetch him. By the door hung a clock with old gun-barrels for weights, by the window was a gunsmith's bench, and clocks and guns lay all around. Soon Lacedelle—a tall, lithe, active man in middle life—entered, and made us welcome. He showed us some rifles made on the Martini system, which were designed for the Bersaglieri soldiers. Then he showed us a gun with a very long tiny barrel and a large hollow stock of iron. There was written on it "*Venturo Lacedelle, 1831.*" It was an air-gun invented by his grand-uncle. The air was pumped into the stock, which held enough to discharge twenty rounds of small shot. On a neighbouring house were two frescoes, one representing Painting and the other Mechanics. This latter, curiously enough, was the figure of a woman examining the machinery of a watch—the antitype of the female watchmaker of Cortina.

Immediately below this village were cracks in the ground with rough broken edges, and here and there depressions. A peasant told us that the piece of ground we were looking at was part of a landslip, a river of soil, over a yard thick, that was moving on a bed of clay, from the foot of Mount Tofano towards the Boite river, at the rate of from a foot to a foot and a half a year. The village road that crosses it is constantly being carried downwards and has to be re-made.

In a few minutes after leaving Lacedelle we came to **Gillardon** on the *Rutorgo* and *Rumerlo* torrents. This

is a second famous old gun-making place, although the trade is now extinct. It disputes its neighbour's claim to priority in the invention of the air-gun, claiming it for Alessandro Gillardoni, one of its sons, a rather famous mechanical inventor, who died at Vienna ten years before the date on Lacedelle's gun. The houses of these villages, like those in Cadore, have their lower parts of stone and the upper of wood. The well made and highly decorative nature of much of the wood-work showed the mechanical genius of the people. Fifteen minutes' walk from Gillardon brought us to the foot of Crepa. Here we had to choose between the climb and the walk. A finger-post pointed us to a zig-zag path that led up the precipitous face of the rock, whilst our road continued up the slope. We preferred taking it on the flank, and held on the "even tenor of our way." This led us between great boulders that had evidently fallen from the side of Crepa in days gone by. They were covered with grass and moss, and with pine-trees, whose stems had wriggled out of all darkness and crookedness into sunshine and straightness. Soon we gained the top of our slope, where we found a great green plateau, of which the summit of Crepa formed a part. The summit is well wooded, and the path winds pleasantly amongst pine-trees, towards the edge of the precipice. As we neared it we had to look to our feet, for the rock was split in many places, leaving great gaping fissures that ran down into unknown depths. The view was magnificent. The broad green valley of the Boite lay spread out before us, with Cortina lying in the *conca* at our feet. Westward was Tofano, northward the great mountains of Cristallo and Pomagognon, with the pass of Tre Croci between them. The valley eastward was a mass of dark pine-trees, which ran up the slopes of Sorapiss on one side, and of Rocchetta on the other. Antelas and Pelmo beyond, in the same direction, towered grandly. Wearied travellers can find refreshment on this lofty lonely spot, 5184 feet above the sea-level, for an enterprising woman has here opened a restaurant. She is

bringing up a family, too, her house more resembling an eagle's eyrie than anything else. I was not surprised to hear her say that her mind was only at rest about her children when they were safe in bed. Before descending to Cortina we crossed the plateau, continuing some distance along the road that goes by *Pocol* to *Falzarego* and on over the pass by *Castel Andraz* to *Caprile*. From the green Alp, which we made the terminus of our walk, we had a splendid view of Nuvolau with its curious isolated rocks, called the *Cinque Torre*, on its summit, the *Croda da Lago*, and the *Rocchetta*.

Volpera Wood, Zanin Caverns, and Mortisa

Cepa, the goal of our first walk, was also that of our second, only, instead of climbing to its summit, we went to explore the Volpera Wood and the caverns and grottoes of Zanin at its foot, taking a different road from Cortina, which led us through the village of Mortisa. **Mortisa** lies east of Lacedelle across *parco* and river. It is a little place, and owes its name, so suggestive of some fatal disaster, to a plague that is said to have swept away the whole of its inhabitants. Now, however, it seemed very much alive. Men and women were busily carrying their crops, and children were playing about in swarms. Beyond this we saw, for the first time in our lives, a real "Jack in the Bean-stalk." How a fragile bean-stalk could become so high, and so strong, and so large, as to be the scene of Jack's delightful adventures, rarely, I daresay, troubles the mind of a child, and when the child becomes a man the story is put away with other "childish things." But here was its solution. Here was a real bean-stalk, forty feet high and twenty-five feet wide. It was made of two double poles, like great masts, fixed in the ground, to which were attached nine or ten strong cross-bars, like the rungs of a ladder, at about four feet apart. Over these were stacked immense quantities of beans. And

“Jack” was there too, climbing to the very top of the stack and running along it horizontally. He had got a rope in his hands, with which he was pulling up loads of beans. This is a bean-growing country, and a “Jack in the Bean-stalk” is to be seen at many a farm-house. Soon we reached the foot of the Crepa, where we saw evidences of a tremendous fall of rock having taken place. A whole slice of the precipice must have come away, and it was these blocks of rock, into which it was shattered, that, piled one upon another, formed the grottoes and caverns we had come to see. When the fall took place no record tells, although tradition says a town lies buried under it. In any case it must have happened long centuries ago, for a pine-wood has grown up over it, changing its wild desolation into beauty. This is the **Volpera Wood**, or the place of the wolf. The way in which the trees conquered every difficulty in their determination to live, and to grow, and to bear themselves erect towards the sky, was a lesson to us. They struggled from under the great shapeless rocks and boulders, crept round them like living creatures, fought their way inch by inch over them, until finally gaining their summits and planting themselves firmly on them, their roots clasping them like strands, they made them pedestals on which they erected their tall and stately trunks. They achieved success in very difficult circumstances, and were all the better for the struggle, just as it is with men and nations, and with everything that lives. The road to the grottoes of **Zanin** through the wood was indicated by a patch of red paint on the trees. The first one we reached had a great Gothic arch for its gateway, formed by fallen rocks. To gain entrance to the second one we had to go up ladders and across bridges of tree-trunks, and then it was “down among the dead men, down, down, down.” Pathways led away in all directions, and more bridges and ladders were provided. At last we reached a large roomy place which is called *La Chiesa di Maria*. From this point we did not need to go back on our steps, for markings on the rocks told us we should

find an exit ahead of us, and so, after many ascents and descents among the large boulders, we came out once more into the open air, at a lovely green shady knoll, some hundred yards from the entrance.

Returning to Cortina we again crossed, but near the Boite, the "River of Soil" that is moving slowly down from Mount Tofano. As it reaches the water the loose material is washed away, and the stones and rocks remain in the bed of the river. On talking to a farmer about these landslips he informed us that very disastrous ones had happened, and that some, that threatened immense damage, were now taking place on the other side of the Boite, between Cortina and the foot of the Zumelles mountain. With this farmer we went to see these strange phenomena.

Costalarges Lake and its Landslips

The Lake of **Costalarges** lies about seven hundred feet above Cortina, and about two miles distant, in a north-eastern direction, at the foot of Mount Girilada. It was the scene of a disastrous landslip which took place on November 1, 1841, caused by a large slice of the mountain falling into the lake. We started on our exploration, going up the track of the landslip. On the way our farmer-guide told us how, immediately after the fall, the land below the lake began to move down in the direction of Pocol. It moved steadily for eight days, the face of the landslip being from twenty to thirty feet in height, and everything went down before it—houses, trees, fields, gardens. No lives were lost, for, as our guide said, a child of three years old could walk before it, and thus the people had time to save themselves and their goods. On the eighth day it reached the bridge that carried the highway from Cortina across the Bigontina torrent. It lifted the bridge into the air, and passing down the bed of the stream, destroying mills and other erections that stood in its way, stopped above the chapel of the *Difesa*.

The land nearest to Cortina was well reclaimed, although the farmer said it was only after ten years' cultivation that any crop was obtained. Originally, it was the best land in Cortina. As we ascended higher, he exclaimed: "Here the first house was struck. I saw it lean towards the face of the landslip as the foundations were pushed from under it, then it collapsed and was gone. So I saw eleven other houses destroyed and buried. *Mi ne ricordo pulito come al giorno d'oggi* (I remember it well, as if it were to-day)." As we neared the lake of Costalarges, the effects of the disaster showed themselves in a long belt of irregular heaps of earth, stones, and rocks, on which stunted self-sown pines were growing. The mountain lake was picturesque with the pines reflected in its still waters; and the face of Mount Girilada looked like beautifully coloured masonry, with its regular strata, and glowing tints of red, orange, white, and yellow. Passing a short distance to the west of the lake, we saw a landslip now in progress. It was a dreadful, though interesting sight. The piece of ground in motion is five hundred feet in length, and six feet in height above the surrounding country, with a well-defined, broken, muddy edge, over which, and through which, water was trickling. The commune had cut down most of the trees that were growing on it, but a few remained, and these were leaning in all directions like the *campaniles* of Venice. We went on to the landslip. It was a pudding of soft soil, stones, rocks, tufts of heather and grass, tree-roots and falling pines; and was full of rents and fissures, and dark pools of water and mud. All the bigger rocks had a clear space round them, which was accounted for by their moving faster than the soil in which they were travelling. The rate of motion of the landslip is about a foot a month, and it has been moving two and a half years in the direction of the lake of Costalarges, and of the village of Alvera. And all this was in the midst of a lovely, green, smiling country, which was being turned into a wilderness.

The Landslips of Staulin and Alvera

From this place our guide conducted us westward for over a mile to see another landslip, on a much greater scale, that was moving from the foot of the mountains, in two branches, towards the villages of **Staulin** and the ill-starred **Alvera**. On the way we passed through a lovely pine-wood, and at a clearance in it, came to a large wooden cross, around which cows were reclining, and to which a shepherd was leading his sheep, going before them and carrying a feeble one on his shoulder. It was their resting-place, for "*i animali pausano due ore*" in the heat of the day, as their masters do. At some distance beyond this, contrasting strangely with its peaceful security and beauty, we came to the second landslip. It had the same characteristics as the one already described, only that, in comparison, the former was but a brook, this a river of volume and power. Water was flowing everywhere over it, and men were cutting huge trenches, hoping to drain it and stop its flow. Poles were erected on the landslip and on its banks, by which its progress was seen and measured. We followed the Alvera branch. Here and there were piles of stones; they were those of houses that had been removed out of its way. At one part, grain and beans were growing on it; but it was a strangely uncertain crop, as the movement of the ground created unevenness and disturbed the roots. At Alvera the face of the landslip was from ten to twenty feet high. At one place part of a house had been taken down, and the landslip had passed over the foundations. At another place it had struck and bulged in a wall of a stable, but the proprietor had buttressed it strongly up from the inside, in the hopes that the efforts of the commune to stay the landslip might be successful, and that he might yet save his property. At another spot the landslip was within a few feet of a dwelling. We asked the goodwife, who came to the door with a child in her arms, if she was not afraid of being overwhelmed. She said

"No ; because the progress of the landslip seemed meantime to be arrested, and in any case it moved very slowly, only about half a *mètre* (about twenty inches) in a year."

The Door of Silvanus in Mount Crepedel

Near Cortina are places whose names recall Pagan times, and, strange to say, Pagan customs in connection with them were practised within the memory of the elder people yet alive. Such, for example, is the **Door of Silvanus**, in Mount Crepedel, by which the god Silvanus was supposed to enter the mountain and pass through it to his dwelling on Mount Casadio on the other side. About half-way to Acquabona the shape of the portal can be easily seen from the road, by those who know where to look for it, as it is high up on the side of the mountain. Wishing to examine it more closely, we set off one day in search of it. On our way thither we met an old man who said that in his early days he had seen people salute it as they passed, by taking off their hats, fearing that if they did not do so the god Silvanus would send to devour them beasts, with heads of men, with the horns and hoofs of goats, and with teeth of iron. After passing *Cojanna*, a single farm-house with two "Jack in the Bean-stalks," we came to the ruins of *Fraina*, which was burned to the ground in 1865, and which, tradition says, was one of the first places to be inhabited in the valley. As we neared the *Porta del Silvano* we passed over a little hill, *Colla di Donna Idea*, which is thought to have been associated with the goddess Ida, and then we crossed a green meadow, *Rampugna*, where it is said sacrifices were offered to the god. Thus the vestibule to the house of Silvanus was worthy of the deity. The door itself somewhat disappointed us. It is a case where "distance lends enchantment to the view." Close at hand the striking resemblance to a door is to a certain extent lost. It consists of a vertical slab of smooth rock, above and around which are projecting ledges which look like lintel and door-

posts. We returned to Cortina by the Faloria wood and the village of Bigontina, one half of the sixteen houses of which are inhabited by the members of one family, all bearing the name of Domenico.

The Ghedini Lakes, by Ronco and Cadin

Another short excursion we made was to the **Laghi Ghedini**, two little lakes lying among the lower hills at the foot of Mount Tofana, about three miles to the south-west of Cortina.

Crossing the Boite by the *Pontechiesa* bridge with its saw-mills, we passed through the two villages of **Ronco** and **Cadelverzo**, divided from, or rather united to, each other by a beautiful wood of young fir-trees. Wood and villages occupy the site of *Villalonga* (the long village), which was buried by a landslip in 1434. Trees, marked with red paint, indicated our way over the hill of Cianderau, behind which, at the height of 750 feet above Cortina, lay the lakes. Their water was clear and limpid, on a sandy bottom, and the smaller of the two was full of little rock islands covered with pine. A clear stream, on a bed of softest moss, feeds the lakes, and slopes of rich deep heather surround them, while over all rise the cliffs of the lower heights of Tofano. It added to the interest of the excursion that we had not to return on our steps, but by continuing our walk round the west side of the hill we had crossed, we reached our starting point by the village of **Cadin**, having beautiful views of the Boite Valley all the way.

Lake of Misurina, by Tre Croce and Valbona

An excursion to the **Lake of Misurina** is one that no traveller to Cortina should omit to make. This lake, one of the most beautiful to be seen in the whole range of the Dolomites, lies cradled in the heart of the great

mountains ten miles north of Cortina, and 2000 feet above it. It is reached by the *Bigontina Valley*, *Tre Croce*, which is the head of the pass, and the *Valbona*. The road is just passable for small carriages, but we preferred to walk, making a start in the cool of the early morning. Going along the right bank of the Bigontina torrent by Pecol and Alvera, we reached at the height of 900 feet the plateau of Lareto. Here Cortina was no longer in view, and soon we also lost sight of Cinque Torre and the slopes of Cadini beyond, as we ascended to a second plateau—1400 feet. An almost level road through a pine-wood brought us within sight of the sources of the Bigontina torrent, which rises in the *Casa di Dio*, the god Silvanus' abode, an extensively wooded plain, on the northern slopes of Mount Faloria. From this point another half-hour's walk brought us to **Tre Croce**, 2100 feet above Cortina. The place is literally a *tre croce*, for three crosses stand on a rising knoll, which are said to mark the spot where three hunters perished. From this crest extensive and magnificent views are obtained of Pomagagnon, Cristallo, Col del Fuoco, Sorapiss, Popena, and down the Valbona towards Marmarole in the far distance. A large hotel—Tre Croce—has just been built here.

Valbona, which we entered beyond Tre Croce, was a mass of green loveliness. It is a deep, rapidly descending valley, but our road, instead of going down into it, runs along its western slopes at an almost level altitude. It led us through tall pines, and across green glades, and past woodmen's huts roofed with bark. By-and-by Valbona opened up to north and south. The view to the south was one not to be forgotten. There lay spread out before us a vast green sea of pine-trees—the great *San Marco* forest—from which, as I have already said, the old Republic of Venice drew supplies of timber for the building of her fleets, and which yet furnishes wood to the Italian arsenals; beyond was the hill of Argentiera where the old Auronzo mines are still wrought, while all was enclosed by the walls of Popena, the range of Marmarole, and the great

northern snow and ice covered slopes of Sorapiss and Antelao. We were admiring this beautiful Italian territory, when, crossing a tiny stream, we saw poles painted red, white, and green, which told us that we had stepped out of Austria back into Italy. The Austrian and the Italian confines go zig-zag across the mountains, so that the traveller is at one minute in the one country, and at the next in the other. Our road now trended northward, leading us rapidly upward out of the valley. At a point where there were some rather high rocks a crucifix was erected, on which were the words: "In September 1878, a mother was here killed by a fall from a rock, and her daughter in trying to save her shared her fate. Matt. xxiv. 42: 'Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.'" Before us at some distance further on there rose an upland slope, under Popena, well adapted for cattle feeding, which had been a subject of quarrel and of fighting between Toblach and Auronzo for more than seven centuries. Paolo Paruto, the famous Venetian jurist, was one of the commissioners who, in 1589, settled this dispute and fixed the boundaries of the Republic.

New peaks now come in sight, two of the Tre Cima di Lavaredo, Dreischusterspitze and Schwalbenkofel, and then the blue lake of **Misurina**, at the far end of which stood two little white houses, reflected in the lake, each flying the tri-coloured flag of Italy. They formed the *Albergo Misurina*, a *succursale* of the *Albergo al Progresso*, Pieve. They were, until this year, the only buildings existing here, but now several villas are being erected, and at the nearer end of the lake a large hotel is going up. The lake is about half a mile long and a quarter of a mile broad, and, at its greatest depth, about twelve feet. It is famous for its trout. Giuseppe Ciani, in his history of Cadore, speaks of the lake and district changing hands in A.D. 788, so that its written history goes back over eleven hundred years. From the Col St. Angelo, at the head of the lake beside the hotel, a magnificent panorama of mountains is seen, Marmarole, Antelao, Corno del Doge, Col del Fuoco,



To face p. 190.

MOUNT POMAGAGNON, ON THE WAY TO BOTESTAGNA.

(By kind permission of Signor Unterreger, of Trento.)

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OF



Sorapiss, Faloria, Cristallino, Popena, Schwalbenkopel, Dreischusterspitze, Tre Cime di Lavaredo, and the Cadini. August seems to be the favourite time for seeing Misurina, for I found that while 827 names were inscribed in the travellers' book at the inn for that month alone, those for all the other months of the year did not amount to 800. Of course these names often did not represent individuals, but families and parties, and, as a rule, only such as spent a night or more at the inn, the names of the multitudes who simply rest, and pass on, being unrecorded. As is well known, it is an ambition of German brides and bridegrooms to spend their honeymoon in poetic Italy, with Venice as their ideal goal. But failing Venice, Misurina seems to content them, and as it is near the frontier, it suits the resources of very many, and so the bulk of the travellers we saw here were newly married couples. The return journey to Cortina from the lake is usually made by Schluderbach and Botestagna, thus completing the circle round Cristallo and Cristallino, and this is what we did. Only, as the road from Schluderbach is the highway over which we have to pass when we leave Cortina, I reserve my description of it till the next chapter.

I have said that Cortina is a great centre for the scaling of the Dolomite Mountains that encircle it. Some thirty years ago almost all of these were literally "untrodden peaks," although now not a season passes, but the majority of them are scaled again and again. When, at the office of the Alpine Club, I have looked over the records of ascensions preserved there, I have been not a little gratified to find that amongst the first to assail, and to conquer, these giant mountains were Englishmen, and in several cases I noticed that one of our countrymen was not only amongst the first, but was the very first to scale the ramparts. A list of the names and heights of the chief of these mountains, and of the names of the heroes who first conquered them, and the dates of their achievements, so far as I have discovered them, may fitly bring this chapter on Cortina to a close.

Antelao (the King of Cadore), 10,986 feet, first ascended by Herr P. Grohmann in September 1863, and then by Lord Douglas, and Mr. F. L. Latham the following year. The ascent takes from 7 to 8 hours.

Pelmo (the Throne of Cadore), 9504 feet, first ascended by Herr P. Grohmann in September 1863, in 9 hours.

Marmarole—Cimon del Foppa, 10,560 feet, first ascended by Captain G. Somano in October 1867, then by two Englishmen, Mr. Utterson-Kelso, and Mr. Trueman, with M. Albert de Falkner in 1872.

Sorapiss, 11,107 feet, first ascended by Herr P. Grohmann in September 1864, in 8½ hours.

Cristallo, 11,000 feet, ascended first by Herr P. Grohmann in September 1865, in 8 hours.

Cristallino, 9585 feet, an ascent of 7 hours.

Popena, 10,905 feet, ascended first by Mr. Whitwell, and then by Mr. Maynell, his wife, and the Rev. A. Beaumont.

Becco di Mezzodi, 8674 feet, first ascended by Mr. Utterson-Kelso in 1866, in 5 hours.

Cinque Torre-Averau, 7986 feet, first ascended by Mr. C. G. Wall in September 1880.

Nuvolau, 8687 feet, an ascent made in 4 or 5 hours.

Croda da Lago, 9069 feet, a peak of the Rocchetta group.

Lago da Lago, 6892 feet. This cannot properly be called an ascension. The lake lies at the foot of the Croda, and is reached by a 3 hours' walk from Cortina.

Tofana, 11,033 feet, first ascended by Herr P. Grohmann in August 1863, an ascension of 7 or 8 hours.

Pomagagnon, 7729 feet.

Marcora, 10,304 feet, a peak of the Sorapiss group.

I may add that the services of experienced and reliable guides, licensed by the Alpine Club, can always be had, and that the names of these, and their charges for ascensions, can be seen at the office of the Club, or in those of the different hotels. See also Appendix.

CHAPTER XII

CORTINA TO SCHLUDERBACH

Majon—Botestagna—Ospitale—Cimabanche

(Distance 10½ miles ; ascent of road to Watershed at Cimabanche 1030 feet ; descent of road from Watershed to Schluderbach 350 feet.

Diligences leave Cortina at 7 A.M. and 3 P.M., arriving at Schluderbach at 9 A.M. and 5 P.M., fare 1 florin. Private carriage : with one horse, 10 fr.; with two horses, 15 fr. Hotel at Schluderbach—*Ploner.*)

IN this glorious Dolomite region one expects to find everywhere that combined interest that nature and history give. Amid splendid highland scenery one looks for castles and churches, mountain refuges and way-side chapels that seem to share in the antiquity of the “everlasting hills” around ; and the next short stage of our journey of about a dozen miles, from Cortina to Schluderbach, answered to such hopes.

Bidding Cortina good-bye, as we drove past the *Acquila Nera*, adorned with Ghedina’s frescoes, and along an avenue of young trees that have been planted to supply the lack of shade around the town, we came to the village of **Majon**. Part of this village, situated below the road, contains the ruins, consisting of two towers and some walls, of an old castle of the noble Tyrolean family, Zane. As in Venice the descendants of doges, senators, and others whose names were in the *libro d’oro*, are gondoliers or hall-porters in the palaces in which their forefathers lived, so here we found eight peasant families of the name of Zane, in the charge of

one of whom were the huge wooden keys of the castle-home of their ancestors.

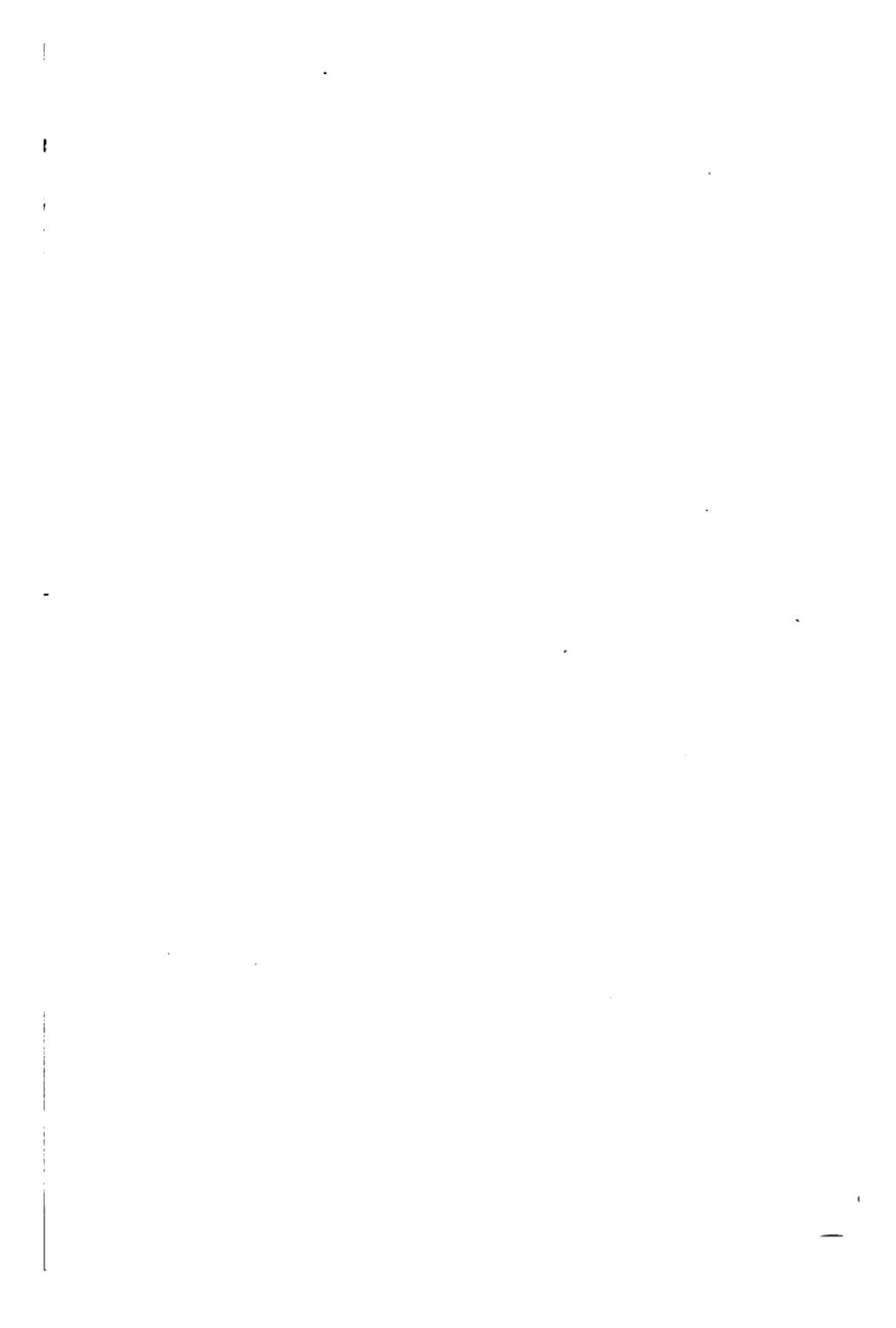
At *Grava*, a small place at the foot of Bianco di Roccia, a green hill to the north of Zane, large quantities of edelweiss are found. This is one of the lowest levels about Cortina where it grows, although in the Agordo Valley, above Belluno, as I have already noted, we found it in abundance by the roadside, 2000 feet below this altitude. Under this hill is the little white village of *Chiave*. Above it rises Pomagognon, whose sharp-ribbed and sorely riven precipices run like a great wall of rock the whole length of that part of the Boite Valley we have yet to travel, that is from Cristallo to Botestagna. Across the Boite are the villages of Ronco and Cadelverzo, with the pine-wood chain between, occupying the site of Villalonga which was destroyed by the landslip of 1434.

Passing a group of houses called *Cademai* and *Verra*, where there is an old-fashioned toll-bar, and a new-fashioned glass manufactory, we entered a pine-wood and an ever-narrowing valley. The scenery here was peculiarly beautiful. The Boite, with its green water, ran in a deep gully parallel with our road; great sweeps of pine slopes carried the eye upward to the walls and towers of Pomagognon on our right hand, and to the peaks of Col Rosà on our left; while before us the great table mountain of Croda del Becco, with its fringe of pines, seemed to shut in the valley.

Our road now skirted a long stretch of soft green meadow-land that lay between us and Pomagognon. It was called *Fiammes* (flames) from a great fire that made this clearance in the pine-wood.

Botestagna.

Beyond this the valley narrows so that road and river, here on one level, approach each other, while both are overhung by the great salmon-coloured cliffs of Pomagognon. We had been anxiously looking out for the giant guardian of the valley, the rock of **Botestagna**, and now it





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MOUNT CRISTALLO AT SUNSET.

(From a drawing by H. G. Keasbey, Esq.)



came in view, filling up the valley. The road made a long curve and we lost sight of it, but it soon reappeared right before us in all its magnificence. It is a striking rock commanding the valley, and it must have been much more so when it was crowned with the walls and towers and battlements of its impregnable castle. There are two ways of climbing to its top. One is by a footpath that goes zig-zag up the valley of the *Felizon* torrent which has its rise in *Lago Bianco*. The torrent itself is crossed by a fragile wooden bridge, at a spot where it flows at the bottom of a narrow rocky chasm, 250 feet deep, down which it makes one shudder to look. As the valley is thickly wooded, this is a romantic though somewhat steep ascent. The other way is by the high-road, which, after crossing the *Felizon* torrent close under Botestagna, runs along the foot of the rock, partly buttressed up against it, and partly cut into its precipitous side, until it reaches the slope of Ancona beyond, when, making one long winding curve, it comes up over the saddle to the level of Botestagna. The ascent gives a good view of the *Pian de Lova* (Plain of the Wolf), where the *Lova* torrent falls into the *Boite* under the *Croda del Becco*. Passing over a wide green rising ground we gained the summit of the rock a thousand feet above Cortina, and five thousand above the sea, on which the castle had stood for nearly a thousand years. We were not disappointed at finding the summit bare. On the contrary, we were rather surprised to see some foundations and old walls still standing, for we had been told that the Austrians in 1867, that it might never be rebuilt, "ruined the very ruins," moving every stone out of its place and bearing them away, that no trace of it might remain.

From 900, at which date Botestagna is first spoken of in history, till 1420, it shared the ups and downs of the brave little Republic of Cadore, of which it formed a part. In 1420, when Cadore joined Venice, it came in for its share of the glories of the greater Republic. Venice was not slow to appreciate the strategic importance of Botestagna, as a bulwark against the northern nations, and

so the Doge Pietro Mocenigo in 1474 ordered that with all study, care, and diligence possible, this *Fortilitium Butestagni magni momenti et importanteriae*, should be rebuilt, strengthened, and enlarged. In the records of the time of its connection with Venice the names of many of the families of the towns and villages we passed in our journey, figure as the *Podestà* (governors) of Botestagna, who received great honour at the hands of the Republic. Then came the fatal year 1511, when Cortina deserted Cadore and Venice, and declared for Austria. It was soon garrisoned by Austrians, out of whose grip it was not wrenched till the time of Napoleon. By the treaty of Campo Fornio, 1797, it came into their hands again, when, afraid to hold it and afraid to lose it, they allowed it to fall into a ruinous condition, and in 1808 they brought this great historic monument to the hammer. It was bought by a company at Cortina, who used its stones for building purposes. What they left, with the exception of the pieces of wall we saw standing, was, as I have already said, destroyed by order of the Austrian Government in 1867.

The view from Botestagna is something beyond the power of any vandalism to destroy. It is magnificent. The whole valley of the Boite, to away beyond Cortina, lay spread out before us. The great mountains on either side, their green slopes thickly wooded with pine and oak, the river and the road, like long ribbons of blue and white, stretching along the whole extent far as the eye could reach, formed a picture not soon to be forgotten.

After Botestagno the road runs up the Felizon Valley, and we had the Crodo di Ancona at our left hand, and at our right the "gable-end" of Pomagagnon, and also the Punto del Forno. The Crodo di Ancona has at one part, high above the road, an opening which looks like a great Gothic window. It is called the *Porta di Ancona* (the Gate of Ancona). Through this window flows the *Ru di Ancona*, a small stream we now crossed by a bridge with great protecting walls. It seemed a bridge out of all proportion to the work it had of carrying the king's highway





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THE DURRENSTEIN AFTER A STORM, AT SUNSET.

(From a drawing by H. G. Keasbey, Esq.)



across a rivulet, till we remembered that in winter and in early spring, when the snow melts, the *Ru di Ancona* is no longer a rivulet, but an impetuous mountain torrent. As we advanced on our road the *Val Grande*, a lateral valley, that conducts, under the ice and snow-capped mountains of Cresto Bianco, to Tre Croce, opened up to our view, and shortly afterwards we drew up at Ospitale.

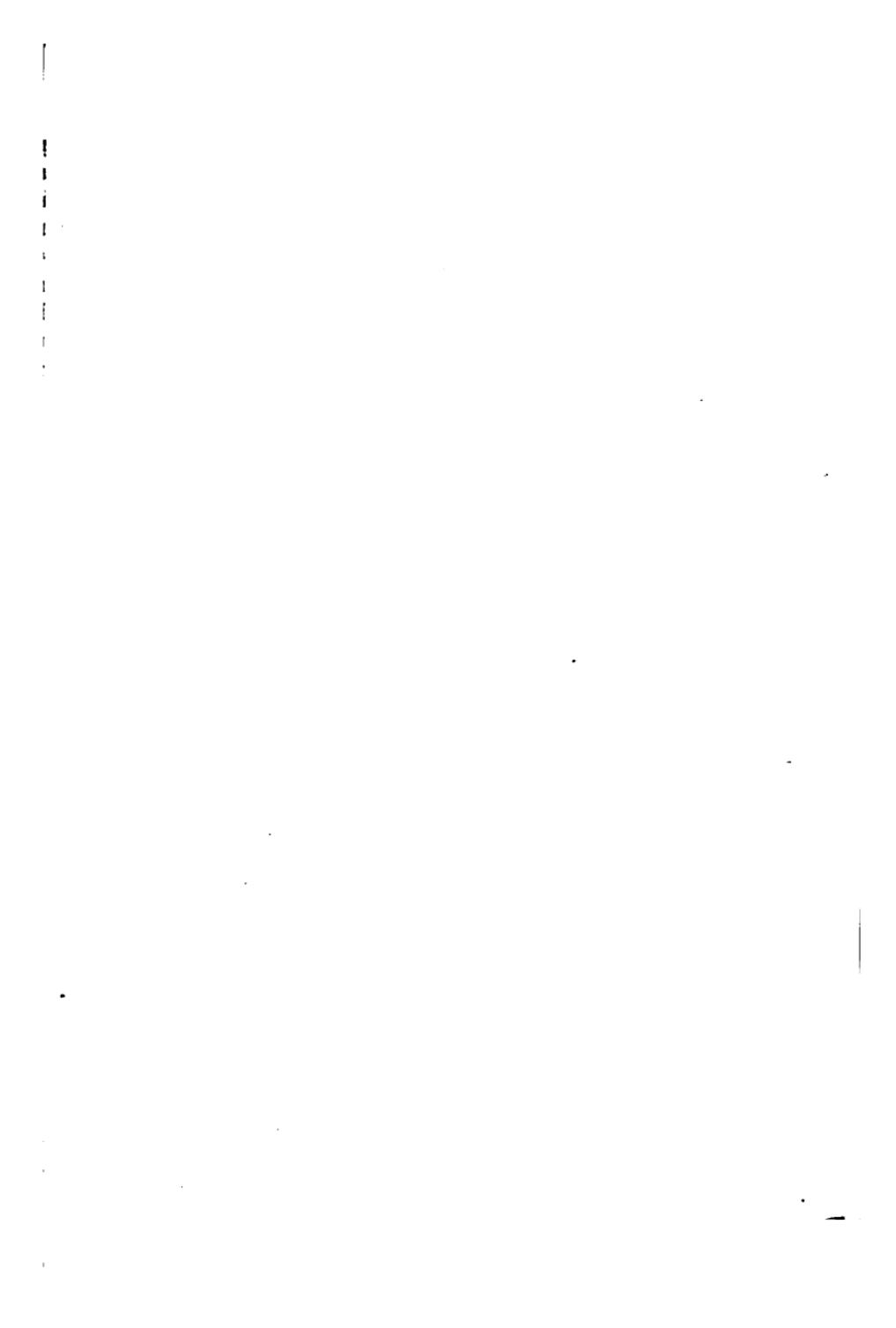
Ospitale

Ospitale, situated nearly 900 feet above Cortina, or 5000 above the level of the sea, consists simply of a small inn on one side of the road, and a small Gothic chapel on the other. Originally it was, like the place of the same name we passed in the Piave Valley, the seat of an hospice for pilgrims and travellers, and the foundation of this one, as of that, goes back to the tenth century. We found the little Gothic chapel interesting. It was erected in 1226 by the family Consorti, of Vinigo, who owned Ospitale. On either side of its little wooden porch is a fresco very much destroyed, but still decipherable. That on the right represents St. Christopher with his palm-tree staff, and with the child Christ on his shoulder. That on the left is St. Nicholas, standing on a landing-stage aiding passengers to get on shore from a boat that is being tossed about on a stormy sea. Both subjects, especially this latter, are strange ones to be found in such a mountain place as this. The altars are noticeable as having their fronts covered with old embossed leather. St. Nicholas is the subject of that of the main altar, and the one to the left, and St. Anthony, abbot, with his staff and bell and the flame of fire in his hand, on the right hand side one; and above each altar is a picture reproducing the subject of the leather below. Above the high altar there is also a picture by Cesare Vecellio, Titian's cousin, of St. Nicholas, St. Anthony, and St. Blasius.

Coming out of the chapel we met two chamois hunters,

spare, weather-beaten, lynx-eyed men, inured to climbing and fatigue, not unlike chamois themselves. They were father and son. Each carried a gun and a telescope, and between them they bore one of those graceful creatures that fall in the lofty solitudes before their skilful shots. Throw-ing their burden on the ground by the inn door, they began at once eagerly to scan with their telescopes the heights of *Col dei Stombi* opposite, and it was not long before they discovered a couple of chamois, which they marked for their prey. After taking a little refreshment they started in pursuit. We asked them what they did with their game, and they said they sold it to the hotel-keepers at Cortina and Toblach, and that a good-sized chamois fetched about twenty florins.

During a later excursion we had a talk with another of these *cacciatori*, as they are called. He, too, was a thin, spare, wiry fellow. Unlike the majority of these men, who go hunting in pairs, he always went alone, his only companion being a faithful dog. Dressed in a green em-broidered jacket, green knee-breeches, and thick-ribbed green stockings, and with his gun and telescope in his hand, he had a very picturesque appearance. In a sack, which was also green in colour, strapped across his shoulders he had two beautiful chamois, a buck and a doe. He had shot them at nightfall on a lofty peak, and their bodies had rolled away from him down its steep slopes. Darkness put a stop to his descent in search of them. Wrapping himself in his cloak, he passed the night under a rock. Mr. Ruskin says, "The rest that is glorious is of the chamois couched breathless in its granite bed, not of the stalled ox over his fodder," and this was the rest this huntsman enjoyed. In the early morning the scent of the chamois always goes downward. Resuming his search he therefore made one long descending loop after another, until he got below where they lay, when at once the scent led his dog to the spot. On an average, all through the season, he killed one chamois a day. In four seasons a hundred and sixty had fallen to his gun. He confirmed



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THE THREE PEAKS OF LAVAREDO, AS SEEN FROM THE GORGE OF REINZTHAL.

(By kind permission of Signor Davide Riva, of Calalzo.)



what I remember a hunter in the Western prairies once told me, that, living in the open air, no cold, no wind, no rain, no weather in fact hurt him, and when the time came that he had again to live indoors he felt as if he could not breathe. Too often, like the Alpine climbers, these hunters fall victims to their sport. Indeed they pursue their vocation not free from the presentiment that some false step will one day end their lives.

Resuming our journey, our road still ascended among pine-trees; we opened up a little lateral valley to our right called *Forame*, down which a small stream came tumbling from the heights above, and fell into the Felizon torrent, which was now flowing parallel to our road.

As we advanced the great summit of Croda Rossa began to come into view before us on the left—a mountain well-named the “Red Mountain,” for its rocks gleamed out in richest hues of red and pink in the warm sunshine. Soon we passed, on our right, the *Lago Nero*, a small lake of dark-coloured water, and on our left *Ru Freddo*, a stream whose cold waters come down over a rich yellow mossy bed, from *Col Freddo* (the cold mountain), the dense woods of which at least suggest shade and coolness.

Cimabanche.

Soon after passing Lago Bianco, and Mount Schönleiten, we drew up at **Cimabanche**, the highest point in our journey. Its height is about 150 feet above the rock of Botestagna, 1150 feet above Cortina, and 5150 feet above the lagoons of Venice. It is the watershed of the country. We were near the source of the Felizon, which flows into the Boite, and thence into the Piave; and also at that of the Rienz, which flows into the Adige; the waters of both ultimately reaching the Adriatic, the one to the north, and the other to the south, of Venice. Cimabanche affords a magnificent mountain prospect, especially towards the west, in which direction, between Croda Rossa and Strudelköpfe,

appear the peaks of Dürenstein. Of course no open view can be had, for although Cimabanche—the summit of the brae—is lofty, loftier mountains close it in on every side. At this spot was gained one of the early victories of the Cadorini over the Germans. In 1347, after having first taken from them the castle of Botestagna, five thousand mountaineers, under Frederico Savorgnano, encountered the main army of the Germans here, and completely routing them, drove them beyond Toblach into the Pusterthal.

The road now rapidly descends, and among the new mountain forms that came in view, such as Rauhkoffel to our right and Knollkopf to our left, new also as bearing for the most part German instead of Italian names, one familiar form loomed up against the sky, away in the far north-east—it was the Cadini, above the Lake of Misurina. The lateral valley of Popena, which opened up to our right, enabled us to see it well.

Advancing a few hundred yards more, just at a point when the glories of this side valley, as well as of the main valley of the Rienz down which we were passing, were visible, an inviting wayside inn, which has spread itself along both sides of the road, appeared, at which we made a willing halt—it was *Schluderbach*.

CHAPTER XIII

SCHLUDERBACH

Mount Piana—Oberseeland—Helen's Ruhe— Sigismund's Brünnen—Eduard Felz

(Distant from Cortina 10½ miles, from Misurina Lake 5 miles, from Toblach railway station 8½ miles. Height above sea-level 4800 feet. It consists of a single comfortable Inn, "Hôtel Plöner," containing Post and Telegraph Government Offices.

Postal Diligence for Cortina at noon and 5 P.M., and for Toblach 9.5 A.M. and 5 P.M. From Schluderbach many mountain ascensions can be made, and at least one guide lives in the Inn.)

IN our journey through the Dolomite Mountains our resting-places had hitherto been towns and villages, boasting a great antiquity. In contrast to all these our last halting-place was neither a town, nor a village, but a little German wayside inn that is but of yesterday.

Half-a-century ago, when there were no railways circling round and round the Dolomites, when the snort and the tramp of the iron horse were heard, neither at Belluno, nor at Toblach, the traffic that passed along our great highway was immensely greater than it is at present. For example, all the wood cut in the Pusterthal was brought up the valley of the Rienz, which we were now traversing, to be put into the Boite at Cortina, thence to find its way into the Piave at Perarolo, and so on to Venice. And all the commerce between Trieste and Innsbruck, that is now carried round by Pontebba and Villach, also passed down

this way. One can imagine the cheerful bustling life of the valley in those days, when hundreds of teams of horses, with their hearty drivers and woodmen, were engaged in the traffic.

Hans Plöner, a shrewd German, lived at a little place called Schluderbach, near Toblach. He thought that at the lonely spot, where we now were, a "halfway house" might be a useful and paying concern, and so in 1836 he settled here and opened a small *osteria* with "lodgment for strangers." By-and-by he bought a piece of land, cleared it of trees, and built an inn. The spot was then called Carbonin, but gradually the name was disused, and that of the place the enterprising German came from was substituted, hence Schluderbach. Now the house is owned by the grandson of the founder, who has enlarged it, and adapted it to the changed times in which he lives.

Schluderbach is about eleven miles from Cortina, eight from Toblach, five from Misurina, up the lateral valley which here joins the Rienz, and it is 4866 feet above the sea. The scenery around is magnificent, it is a splendid centre for Alpine climbing, and also for short excursions; and although the unpretentious *Gasthof* is often passed over by the English and American traveller, it is one of the most comfortable resting-places to be found in the Tyrol. Its advantages were discovered by the late Emperor Frederick, when he was Crown-Prince, and by the Empress-Queen Frederick, then the Crown-Princess Victoria, who spent part of several seasons here. Our young landlord then acted as a guide, as his father managed the hotel. He accompanied the Crown-Princess in all the ascensions she made of the surrounding mountains, and he described her to us as "a brave and indefatigable alpinist." He showed us with great pride a handsome breast-pin and a pocket-knife given him by the late Emperor Frederick, as souvenirs of the Royal visits, and as marks of appreciation of his services. The knife was very interesting, as it had on one side of it a figure of "*Unser Fritz*," and on the other that of his father, the late Emperor William.

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SCHLUDERBACH.

(By kind permission of Signor Unterreger, of Trento.)





In going on a voyage of discovery over our new premises, we found a covered corridor, leading out of the *Speisesaal*, into a beautiful little Gothic chapel. Red priestly vestments lay on a side table, and a golden, or at least a gilded, chalice and paten stood on the altar. The chapel was of course much older than the Inn which has "adopted" it. Like the one at Ospitale, there is no priest attached to it, and it was designed for the use of passing strangers. While connected with the Inn its main entrance stood open towards the road.

The elder Plöner was a man given to adaptation, for the hotel bell, hanging outside the door, which is rung vigorously on the arrival of every diligence and carriage, has a cross on one side, and a I.H.S. on the other, and is apparently from the old chapel. Our next discovery in this modest house was something very different from the old Gothic chapel—it was a fully equipped post and telegraph office. We expected to find the old world and the new meet and mingle in odd ways and in odd places in these mountains, but we were surprised to find this lonely spot, with no village, with no house even near, having a direct connection with the postal and telegraphic system of Europe. The explanation was forthcoming that the Austrian Government maintained it in the interest of travellers, and especially of mountain guides and climbers, for the sad reason that accidents of one kind and another are all too common, and it is important to be able to communicate at once with the outer world.

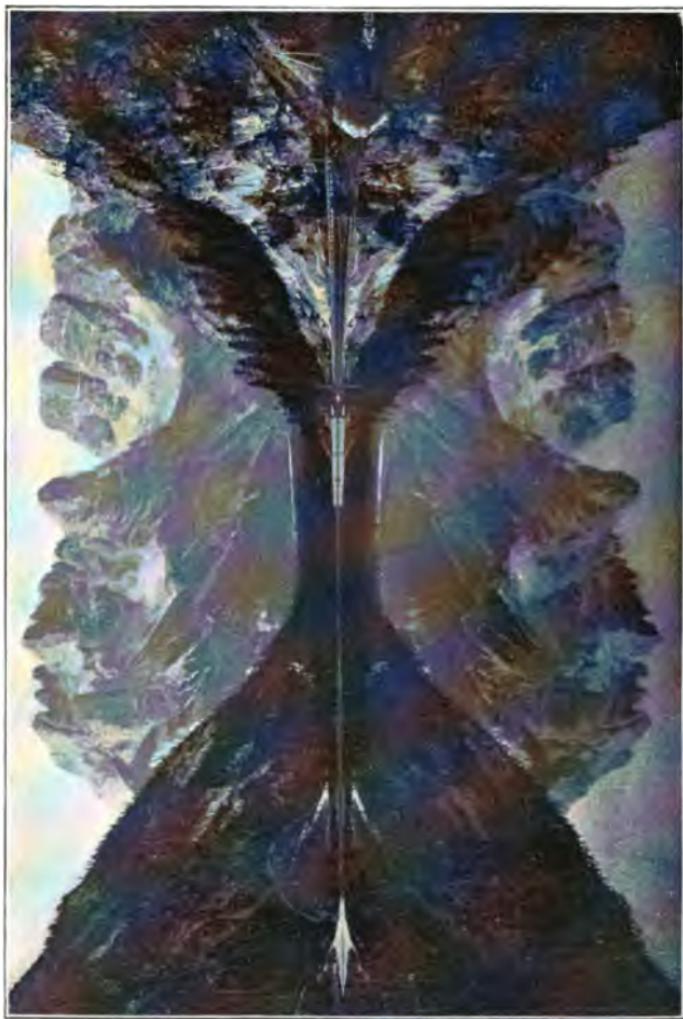
We had an illustration of this before our eyes. On the wall of the telegraph office hung an ice-axe, an Alpine staff, a pair of snow-shoes, a pair of ice-clamps, and a long rope stained with blood. The landlord informed us that they had belonged to poor Michael Innerkofler, a well-known and highly esteemed and trusted guide, who was killed on Mount Cristallo, a few weeks before our arrival, at a place visible from the inn. He had had seventeen years' experience of mountain-climbing, and had been the first to make the ascent of many of the most precipitous of the Dolomite

peaks. He had a genius for mountaineering, and had mastered all kinds of difficulties, and passed through the greatest perils, and yet he lost his life on a comparatively safe part of the mountain.

Teetotalers may score a point in his case if they choose, for Herr Plöner told us that though Innerkoefler made his home at the inn, where of course there is always a good deal of merry-making over the wine-bowl and the pipe, he would neither drink nor smoke, as he found he was better in nerve power, and in power of endurance, when he abstained from both.

He left the inn at daybreak of the fatal morning, to conduct two tourists up Mount Cristallo, whose glittering summit of ice and snow rises 10,950 feet above Schluenderbach, and whose green serpentine glacier comes down almost to the little plain on the edge of which the house stands.

The mountain is not considered either particularly fatiguing or dangerous, and the three had made the ascent, and had returned safely over all the more or less risky parts of the way, and had only to cross the glacier, when an hour's walk would bring them to their starting-point. Innerkoefler and the two tourists were tied together with the rope we saw, the guide being behind. The first tourist had reached the centre of the glacier, and was crossing a *crevasse* by an ice bridge, when it gave way under him, and he was precipitated into a chasm. In a moment his companion was pulled down after him. Innerkoefler resisted the sudden tug of the two men, and sustained their weight till the rope imbedded itself in the flesh of his arm. When at last he had to yield he did not fall as the others did, but was dragged down with tremendous force head first, his head knocking against the sides of the chasm in his descent. The *crevasse* was 60 feet deep, so he was mangled, and killed. He had so broken the fall of the tourists, that they were neither of them seriously hurt, but only badly bruised. Our landlord had been watching the climbers, and missing them suddenly from the mountain, feared something had



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LAKE OF DURREN, WITH MOUNT CRISTALLO.
(By kind permission of Signor Daniele Riva, of Calalzo.)

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happened, when setting out he met a second Alpine party who were behind Innerkofler on Cristallo, and who brought the dreadful news.

Alpinists become wonderfully attached to their guides. A sort of comrade-soldier-feeling of having borne fatigue and danger together seems to spring up between them, and so when this accident became known telegrams and letters of inquiry and sympathy, now stored in the archives of this lonely post-office, came pouring in from all European countries, and even from America. By the aid of a field-glass we saw the spot in the cracked and fissured glacier, marked by a black dark line, the mouth of the fatal *crevasse* in which Innerkofler lost his life.

Travellers who have not visited the Lake of Misurina from Cortina by Tre Croce can do so very easily from Schluderbach, from which it is distant about two hours. Passing up the Val Popena, between Mount Cristallo and Mount Piana, a wooden bridge across the Popena is reached, which torrent comes down almost the whole extent of the valley, and falls into the Dürren See below Schluderbach. At the bridge it is joined by the cold glacier stream of Mount Cristallo, which can be seen at no great distance issuing from under the ice. Standing on the bridge a fascinating view is obtained of the glacier itself. It looks a wild, thick, irregular river of ice, all scored and fissured by pressure, and with a steep sloping edge. Snow fills up the passes between the peaks above. Below the glacier a great glaring white *boa* has spread itself over the valley.

Proceeding upwards the valley narrows, and the Popena flows in a deep gully. In about an hour we came to a little mill and a bark-covered hut. The mill was for the manufacture of pine-oil, and bottles of this extract filled the little windows that looked on to the road, so as to tempt travellers to become purchasers. Near this point we recrossed the frontier, and were once more in Italy.

After this, the road, which had been comparatively level,

left the Val Popena to our right hand, and mounted rapidly in a zig-zag fashion a steep but well-wooded slope, which brought us out, after a climb of about a thousand feet, on to a level road, which, passing the Col S. Angelo, conducted us in a few minutes to Misurina.

Ascent of Mount Piana

The Col S. Angelo, like Cimabanche, is the watershed between the Adige and the Piave. At its foot the road goes off to Mount Piana, which can be easily ascended from this point. Its altitude above Misurina is some sixteen hundred feet, and above Schluderbach, which it overlooks, some thousand odd more, while its total height above the sea-level is nearly eight thousand. Though it is thus not a high mountain, its central position is such that the view obtained from it is one of the most extensive and the most striking to be enjoyed in the whole Dolomite region. It is far more worthy of ascent than many other higher mountains, to scale which involves peril and fatigue. In crossing the level summit of Piana, one passes again out of Italy into Austria; half the mountain belonging to the one kingdom, and half to the other. The boundary line is that of the old Republic of Venice, and is marked by a stone bearing the date 1753.

Opposite Mount Piana, overhanging Schluderbach, is Mount Strudelköpfe. A little beyond the inn, its precipitous cliffs form a wall along the highway, but just opposite, it presents a steep, well-wooded slope. A winding path leads gradually up and over this shoulder of the hill. One finds here pleasant shade, and seats set at convenient places to command good views. It was delightful to linger in this pine-wood, but the pathway could be made the portal to a long and pleasant excursion, for at one point there was written up, "*Oberseeland, Platzweizen by Prags*, four hours;" and the trees were marked with yellow and red lines of paint, to show the way.

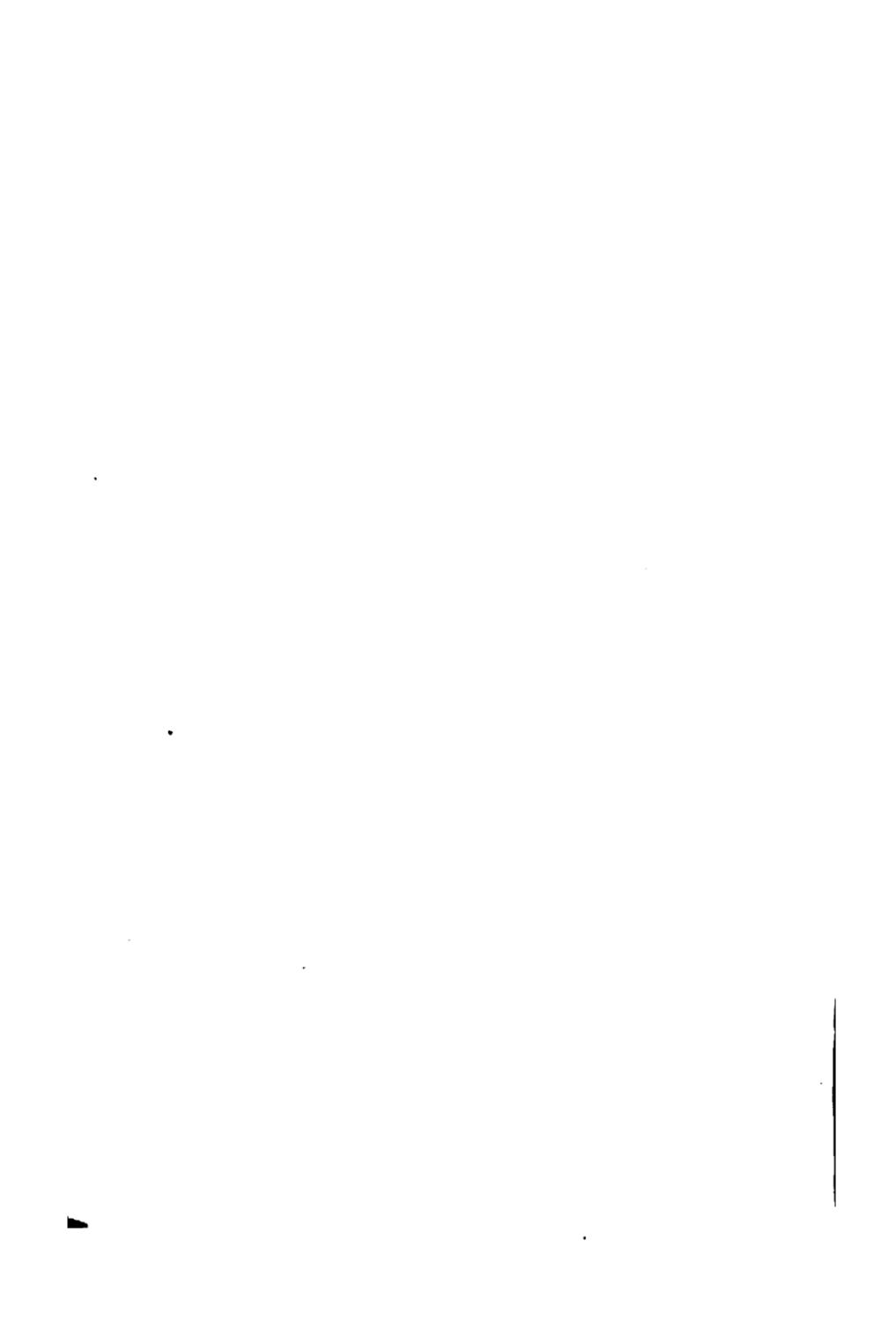


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LAKE OF TOBLACH.

(From a drawing by H. G. Keasbey, Esq.)





Oberseeland**EXCURSION**

This excursion need not be made on foot, however, for once the shoulder of the hill is surmounted, the pathway meets a good road, passable for light carriages, that leaves the valley a short distance above Schluderbach. Lovely pine-woods are passed through almost all the way, and splendid views are obtained of the red rocks of Croda Rossa and the Rosealp.

**Helen's Ruhe, Sigismund's Brünnen, and
Eduard Felz****SHORT WALKS**

A number of short walks can be made around Schluderbach, occupying from thirty to sixty minutes, such as to Helen's Ruhe, Sigismund's Brünnen, and Eduard Felz. The ways to these places are indicated by flags tied to the tops of fir-trees. The two former are pleasant rambles, but the latter is rather a fatiguing walk, as the way crosses the rough, stony *boa* of Mount Cristallo, involving, at the same time, a climb of three hundred feet. It should, therefore, be made when the valley is in shade; for going in sunshine, we felt the glare something almost unbearable. Eduard Felz is a huge isolated rock, two hundred feet high, but well wooded with pines, and a winding road leads to its summit. It affords a good view of Cristallo and its glacier, the waters from which wash its base.

It was with a double regret we said good-bye to Schluderbach, for not only were we leaving its quiet, romantic, health-giving beauty, but we were quitting our last halting-place, and the next short stage of our journey would carry us "Through the Dolomites."

CHAPTER XIV

SCHLUDERBACH TO TOBLACH

Lake of Dürren—Landro—Lake of Toblach

(Distance to Toblach railway station $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles ; descent of road 750 feet.
Postal Diligence to Toblach 9.5 A.M. and 5 P.M., fare 1 florin.
Service of private carriages.
Hotel close to Toblach railway station, *Grand Hotel Toblach*,
and more modest ones *Ampezzo* and *Plöner*. Village of
Toblach is about a mile beyond the station.)

THE last stage of our journey was a short one. A run of little more than eight miles and a descent of seven hundred and fifty feet carried us from lonely Schluderbach to the busy railway station of Toblach. But these eight miles of road were worthy of the country we were leaving. Great mountains towered above us, whose precipitous cliffs formed perpendicular walls on our right hand and on our left. We seemed to be passing all the way through a gigantic natural portal, worthy of the charmed region of the glorious Dolomites.

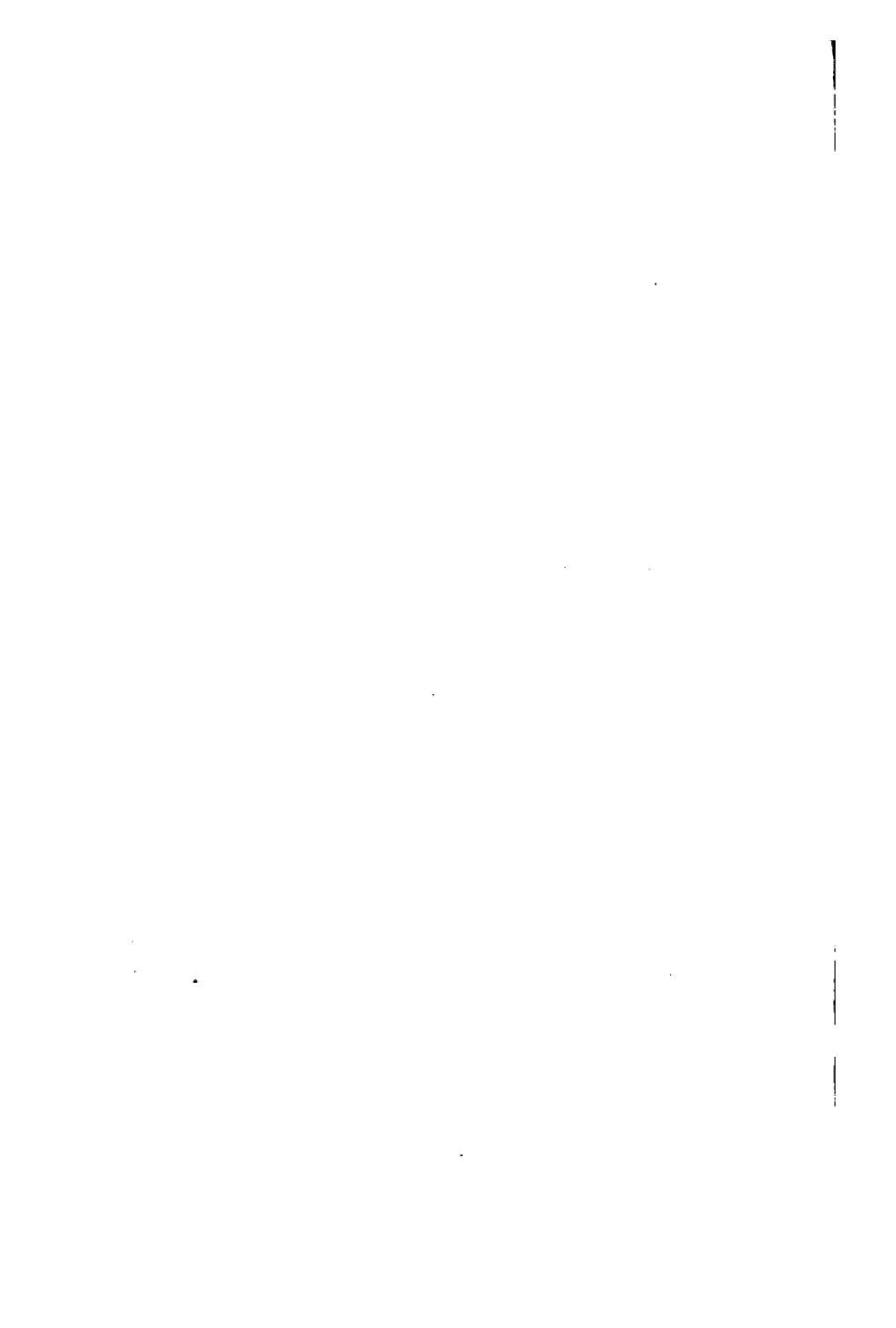
On leaving Schluderbach we had the great precipices of Strudelköpfe, fringed with pines, on one side, and those of Mount Piana and Due Torre at a little distance on the other, with the torrent from Popena flowing between us and them. In a short time the stream became a lake, whose clear waters on its sandy bottom came close up to our road, giving us splendid reflections of the great mountains overhead. It was the small but lovely **Lake of Dürren**. Towards its lower end it receives the waters

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TOBLACH IN THE PUSTERTHAL.
(By kind permission of Signor Unterweiser, of Trento.)



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of the Black Rienz, which rises amongst the slopes of the Tre Cime, and then running out of the lake towards Toblach, gives to our valley its own name. Our road crossed the lake by a long bridge, and the river, now on our left, almost lost itself in a great white *boa* that comes down from Strudelköpfe. From the bridge, looking eastward and southward, we obtained a magnificent view of our old friends, Popena and Cristallo, with their glaciers and snowy passes and ice-bound summits.

Presently we came abreast of the lateral valley of the Black Rienz. It was a long deep gorge disclosing to us new mountain scenery of magnificent grandeur. Looking up it we saw a great, square, massive, lofty precipice, behind which rose high into the air, with sides of smooth rock, the Tre Cime di Lavaredo, or, as they are called in German, the Drei Zinnen, their summits glowing in the glory of the rays of the western sun. One feels awestruck looking up at these sheer walls and towers of living rock, that rise ten thousand feet into the blue sky. They looked unscalable, and yet the daring feet of bold alpinists have conquered them. I believe poor Michael Innerkofler had climbed them, although the honour of having first done so belongs not to him, but to one of his family, Francesco, who with another guide, Pietro Salcher, and a tourist, Grohmann, successfully made the ascent, on August 21, 1869. The Tre Cime form part of the "scientific frontier" between Italy and Austria.

At this point, about two miles from Schluderbach and a hundred and twenty feet below it, we come to **Landro**. Landro, like Schluderbach, consists simply of an hotel (*Bauer*), which, however, embraces a number of separate houses. It is a much more fashionable place than Schluderbach, and is the favourite resort of many families from Vienna. Its position is excellent, for it affords splendid views of all the mountains of which we have spoken.

As at Schluderbach, there is a little Gothic chapel here too, although it is not part and parcel of the hotel. It is worth visiting, for it contains a beautiful fresco of nine

angels kneeling in the attitude of worship, their peacock-coloured wings half shut, half open, with, written on the golden disks around their heads, these words, "We adore Thee," "We glorify Thee."

As we advanced on our way we crossed the Rienz, and shortly afterwards passed under the guns of a fort, which the Austrians have recently constructed to guard the road. The fort was begun in 1886 and finished in 1890.

Our valley became now well wooded, and somewhat open, giving us a glimpse of the heights of Dürrenstein above the lower hills to our left, and disclosing paths by which Strudelköpfe, now behind us, could be conquered. But it soon returned to its normal character of a glorious rocky portal.

Recrossing the broad white stony bed of the Rienz, the valley suddenly narrowed, and we came to a spot called the *Ponte della Chiusa*, so named because here there used to be apparatus, probably towers and chains and gates, such as we saw to have existed both on the Piave and the Boite, for the closing of the valley—a portcullis to our Dolomite portal.

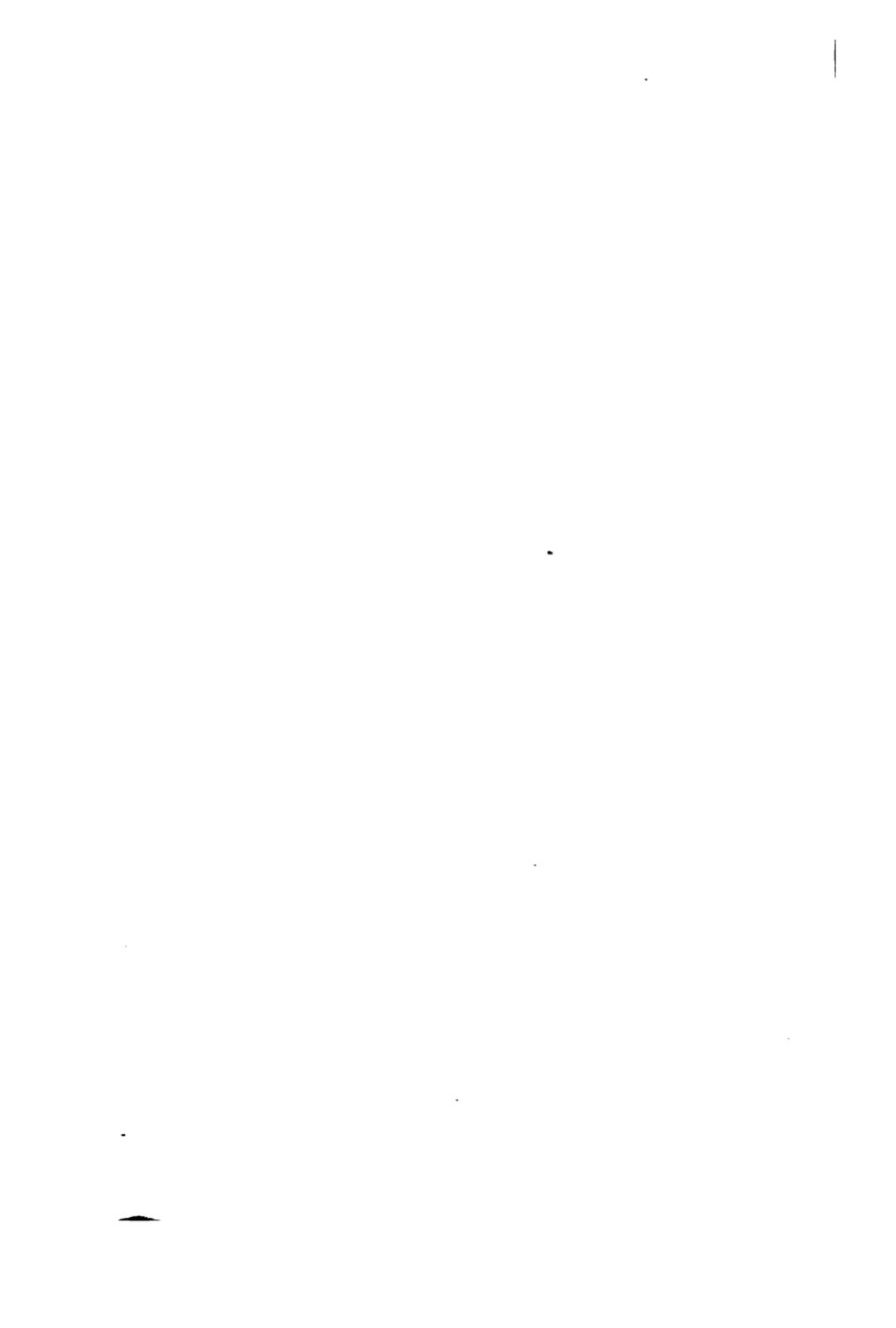
The mountain that forms the western wall of this part still bears the name Sarenkopf, which signifies the mountain that shuts up or locks the passage. *Boas* from the mountains filled up the narrow valley on either side of us, their white glare somewhat relieved by stunted fir-trees that struggle nobly for life among the dry stones. At one place we got a glimpse through our portal of the ranges across the Pusterthal, but soon the view was closed by spurs of Sarnkofel and Nennerkofel that, seeming to overlap each other, once more shut up the valley. A little further on it widened, and a break to the west revealed in all its grandeur the great peak of Dürrenstein. It looked both steep and broken, and suggested hard work to any one who should ascend it, but our coachman, no alpinist to look at, assured us that it was easy, as he himself had done it.

Once more we crossed the winding Rienz, and then passed under a huge, almost perpendicular, black-coloured

rock, through the face of which water was everywhere oozing. It was well named the *Croda del Acqua* (the Water Rock). Its summit projected like a great capital. This *croda* was at our right hand, and facing it on the other side of our road were two massive red-coloured peaks. These black and red mountains were the door-posts of our Dolomite portal.

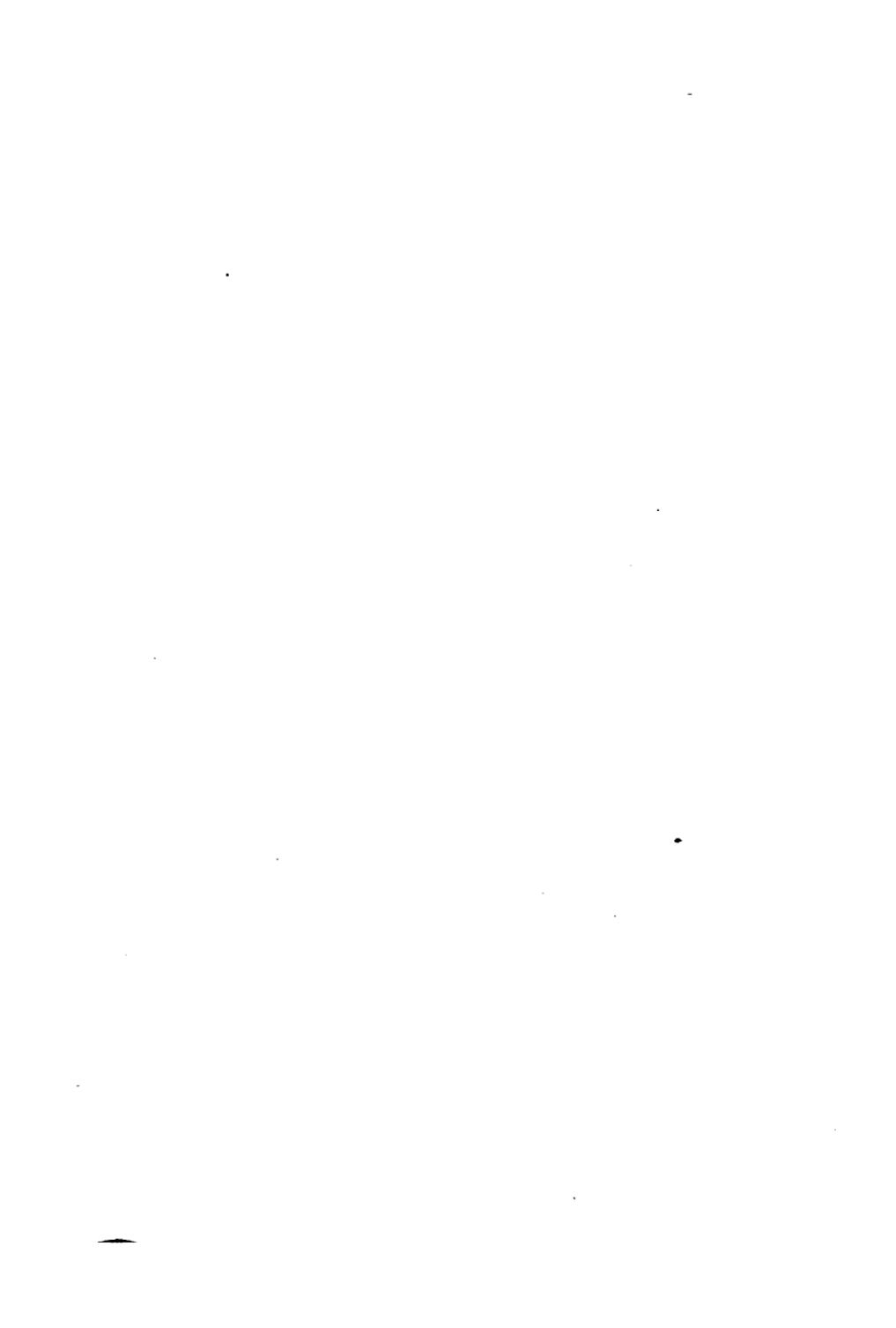
Beyond them the scenery was entirely changed. Low hills like buttresses, or kerb-stones, were on either side of us, and then cultivated land, and soft pine-tree woods, while before us opened the great broad valley of the Upper and Lower Pusterthal, with lofty mountains beyond, some of them snow-covered too, but they were not our Dolomites. In a few minutes we reached the **Lake of Toblach**, a charming piece of water through which flows the Rienz. A narrow strip of sloping pine-wood, temptingly laid out with winding paths, with seats and benches, commanding pleasant views, lies between it and the road. Through the trees the calm clear waters shone in the evening sunlight, and reflected in wondrous perfection the pine-clad hills and lofty peaks on its further side. The lake abounds in excellent trout, and in winter its frozen surface is carried off to Vienna, to be used mainly in making the ices that in summer are in such demand in that city. It is said some thirty thousand cart-loads of ice are taken from this lake each winter.

Another run of a mile and a half through a pine-wood brought us to the station of Toblach, where we were once more in touch with the railway systems of Europe. We were soon far away from our mountains, amid "fresh scenes and pastures new," but the impression never weakened that as there is but one Venice, so there is but one region of the Dolomites, both alike unique in the charm of their character, their history, and their endless interests.



APPENDIX

- RAILWAY TIME TABLES
- DILIGENCE TIME TABLES
- CARRIAGE EXCURSIONS
- HEIGHTS OF MOUNTAINS
- LIST OF GUIDES



RAILWAY.

Venice—Treviso—Belluno.

Miles.	1st Class.			2nd Class.			3rd Class.			1-2.	1-2-3.	1-2-3.	1-2.	1-2-3.
	F.	C.	F.	C.	F.	C.	Venice	Mestre	Treviso	arr.	dep.	arr.	dep.	arr.
5½	1	5	0	75	0	50				5.5	5.20	8.25	10.55	14.20
18½	3	40	2	40	1	55	"	"		5.15	5.33	8.37	11.9	14.30
										5.23	5.38	8.44	11.15	14.35
										5.45	6.25	9.30	12.0	14.57
										1-2-3.				19.25
25½	4	65	3	30	2	15	"	"		dep.	6.10		12.15	15.5
31½	5	70	4	0	2	60	Postioma			arr.	6.35		12.40	15.40
							Montebelluno			dep.	6.54		13.0	16.7
							"			arr.	7.0		13.8	16.27
							Coruña			dep.			13.26	16.56
							"			arr.	7.13		14.36	18.42
							Feltre			dep.	8.11		14.42	21.45
							Belluno			arr.	9.5		15.40	22.42
36½	6	60	4	65	3	0								
53½	9	65	6	80	4	35								
72½	13	15	9	25	5	95								

Belluno—Treviso—Venice.

Miles.	1st Class.			2nd Class.			3rd Class.			1-2.	1-2-3.	1-2-3.	1-2.	1-2-3.
	F.	C.	F.	C.	F.	C.	Belluno	Feltre	Coruña	arr.	dep.	arr.	dep.	arr.
19½	3	55	2	50	1	60				5.0		6.35		13.30
36½	6	55	4	65	2	95				6.0		8.26		14.46
41½	7	45	5	25	3	35	Montebelluno			6.50		9.54		15.48
46½	8	50	5	95	3	80	"	"		7.0		10.10		15.59
53½	9	75	6	85	4	40	Postioma			7.6		10.30		16.7
							Treviso			arr.	7.25		11.0	16.32
							"			dep.	7.45		11.30	16.55
										arr.				21.15
										dep.	8.8		10.30	1-2.
										arr.	8.44		11.15	13.32
										dep.	8.46		11.17	17.17
67	12	10	8	50	5	45	Mestre			arr.	9.0		11.30	13.54
72½	13	15	9	25	5	95	"	"		dep.			14.4	18.6
							Venice			arr.			14.15	18.20
							"			dep.			14.15	18.27

DILIGENCES.

Belluno—Agordo—Cencenighe—Alleghé—Caprile.

	Miles.	Time.	Fare.	F. C.	Miles.	Time.	Fare.	F. C.
Belluno		8.40					8.45	
Mas.	51	9.50	1 0			9.15	0 80	
Agordo	184	12.30	3 20			11.15	1 80	
Cencenighe	25	14.45	4 20			14.45	2 80	
Alleghé	321	16.0	5 20			17.25	5 0	
Caprile	344	16.30	6 0			18.40	6 0	

Belluno—Toblach.

	Miles.	Time.	Fare.	F. C.	Miles.	Time.	Fare.	F. C.
Belluno	12	10.30	24.0		Toblach	15.0	10.0	
Longarone	23	12.30	2.0	1	Landro	15.20	11.30	0 80
Perarolo	27	14.30	4.0	3	Schluderbach	17.0	12.0	1 0
Tai	28	16.0	5.30	4	Cortina	19.0	14.0	2 0
Pieve	arr.				arr.	6.0		F. C.
	dep.				dep.			
Tai	28	16.30	6.0	4	S. Vito	26.4	8.0	1 50
Valle	27	16.55	6.5		Valle	35.1	10.0	18.0
S. Vito	29	17.5	6.15	4	Tai	37.1	10.15*	18.15
Cortina,	391	19.15	8.45	6	Pieve	38.1	10.30	18.30
	arr.				arr.			
Schluderbach	453	21.0	10.10	7	dep.	10.45	18.45	
Landro	564	15.0	7.0		Tai	37.1	11.0	19.0
Toblach	58	10.0	17.30	1	Perarolo	41.1	12.0	20.0
	643	11.0	19.0	2	Longarone	52.1	14.0	22.0
					Belluno	64.1	16.0	24.0

Belluno—Belluno.

* Half-an-hour's rest at Tai.
 Coupé 50 c. extra. Luggage: 5 kilogrammes gratis; above that weight 3 c. per kilogramme, per relay.

DILIGENCES—*continued.*
Longarone—Zoldo.

	Miles.	Time.	Fare.		Miles.	Time.	Fare.
				F. C.			
Longarone	:	6.0	9.0	Zoldo	:	15.30	F. C.
Zoldo	:	9.0	2 0	Longarone	:	18.0	1 50

Pieve—Lozzo—Pelos.

	Miles.	Time.	Fare.		Miles.	Time.	Fare.
				F. C.			
Pieve	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	6.40	1 50	Lorenzago	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	15.30	F. C.
Lozzo	9.0	8.30	1 50	Pelos (Vigo, Laglio, &c.)	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	16.10	0 35
"	9.20	9.20	1 85	Lozzo	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	16.30	0 70
Pelos (Vigo, Laglio, &c.)	10.0	10.0	2 20	"	16.45	18.30	2 20
Lorenzago	10.0	10.0	2 20	Pieve	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	18.30	2 20

Pieve—Lozzo—Gogna—Auronzo.

	Miles.	Time.	Fare.		Miles.	Time.	Fare.
				F. C.			
Pieve	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	6.40	17.0	Auronzo	7.20	15.30	F. C.
Lozzo	9.0	8.30	18.40	1 50	7.50	16.30	0 75
"	9.25	9.25	19.0	Lozzo	8.20	16.45	1 0
Gogna	10.0	10.0	2 10	"	9.0	16.30	2 50
Auronzo	10.0	10.0	2 50	Pieve	10.30	18.30	2 50

DILIGENCES—*continued.*

Pieve—Lozzo—Gogna—S. Stefano.

	Miles.	Time.	Fare.	F. C.	Miles.	Time.	Fare.
Pieve		6.40			S. Stefano		
Lozzo	arr.	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	8.30	1 50	Gogna		
"	dep.		9.0		Lozzo	arr.	6.30 15.0
Gogna		9.25		2 10	"	dep.	8 $\frac{1}{4}$ 16.45
S. Stefano		11.0		3 0	Pieve		9.0 16.45
						15	10.30 18.30
							3 0

Pieve—Lozzo—Forni di Sopra—Carnia Railway Station.

	Miles.	Time.	Fare.	F. C.	Carnia Railway Station	Miles.	Time.	Fare.
Pieve			6.40		2 0		8.30	
Lozzo		10.0			Forni di Sopra	28	19.30	
Forni di Sopra		13.30		4 0	"		4.0	
Carnia Railway Station		18.36		8 20	Lozzo	dep.	8.30	
					Pieve		6 20	
							10.30	
								8 20

Pieve—Ponte nelle Alpi—Vittorio.

	Miles.	Time.	Fare.	F. C.	Ponte nelle Alpi	Miles.	Time.	Fare.
Pieve		10.45	18.45		Vittorio	18 $\frac{1}{2}$	7.30	20.30
Ponte nelle Alpi	15.0	23.0	3 30		Ponte nelle Alpi	41 $\frac{1}{2}$	11.30	1.0
Vittorio	19.0	5.0	5 30		Pieve		16.5	5.55
								5 30

Coupé 50 c. extra. Luggage: 5 kilogrammes gratis; above that weight 3 c. a kilogramme, per relay.

CARRIAGES.

Belluno—Agordo—Caprile.

BELLUNO TO	Dist. Miles.	With One Horse.		With Two Horses.		CAPRILE TO		With One Horse.		With Two Horses.	
		Single Journey.	Return Journey.	Single Journey.	Return Journey.	Single Journey.	Return Journey.	Dist. Miles.	Single Journey.	Return Journey.	Single Journey.
Agordo	18	12	16	22	29	29	35	21	3	5	F. C.
Alleghie	32	22	29	35	40	53	35	16	13	23	F. C.
Caprile	34	25	33	35	45	60	0	34	25	35	F. C.

Belluno—Toblach.

BELLUNO TO	Dist. Miles.	With One Horse.		With Two Horses.		TOBLACH TO		With One Horse.		With Two Horses.	
		Single Journey.	Return Journey.	Single Journey.	Return Journey.	Dist. Miles.	Single Journey.	Return Journey.	Single Journey.	Return Journey.	Single Journey.
Longarone	12	7	9	12	16	0	Landro	6	9	F. C.	F. C.
Perarolo	23	14	20	24	32	0	Schluderbach	8	12	0	40
Tai	27	18	28	30	40	0	Cortina	4	18	0	50
Pieve	28	18	28	30	40	0	Valle	19	23	0	65
Valle	29	21	30	35	45	0	Tai	35	34	0	105
Cortina	45	32	50	60	85	0	Pieve	37	37	0	70
Schluderbach	56	42	62	75	100	0	Perarolo	41	52	0	110
Landro	58	46	68	80	110	0	Longarone	52	48	0	118
Toblach	64	55	80	100	150	0	Caprile	64	55	0	134

CARRIAGE FARES FROM PIEVE TO THE FOLLOWING PLACES:

	Distance. Miles.	With One Horse.		With Two Horses.	
		Single Journey.	Return Journey.	Single Journey.	Return Journey.
Pieve to—					
Calalzo	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 50	2 0	3 0	4 0
Domegge	4	3 0	4 0	6 0	7 50
Lozzo	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 50	5 50	8 0	10 0
Pelos	5 $\frac{3}{4}$	5 50	6 50	10 0	12 0
Vigo	9	8 0	9 0	15 0	17 0
Lorenzago	10	8 0	9 0	15 0	17 0
Treponte	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 0	6 0	9 0	11 0
Gogna	8	5 50	6 50	9 50	11 50
Auronzo	12	9 0	10 0	16 0	18 0
Forest of S. Marco	20	17 0		30 0	
San Stefano	15	12 0	14 0	22 0	25 0
Carnia Railway Station	48	37 0		70 0	
Vittorio	41 $\frac{1}{2}$	25 0	30 0	45 0	55 0

CIRCULAR DRIVES FROM PIEVE TO—

		With One Horse.	With Two Horses.
		Francs.	Francs.
Auronzo, Forest of S. Marco, Misurina, Schluderbach, Cortina, and back to Pieve	30	60	
S. Stefano, Candido, Monte Croce, S. Candido, Toblach, Landro, Schluderbach, Misurina, Auronzo, and Pieve	45	80	
S. Stefano, Candido, Monte Croce, S. Candido, Toblach, Landro, Cortina, and Pieve	45	80	
Auronzo, S. Stefano, and Pieve	16	30	

CARRIAGES BY THE DAY.

		With One Horse.	With Two Horses.
		Francs.	Francs.
For the first day	14	25	
For each succeeding day	10	18	

REGULATIONS.

1. A day's drive to consist of not less than 45 kilometres.
2. Two hours' stoppage allowed on short drives, six on long ones.
3. Driver's *mancia* extra, but he provides for himself and his horses.

HEIGHTS OF MOUNTAINS.

Name.	Place.	Height, Feet.
Ajarnola . . .	Ansiei Valley . . .	8,279
Antelao . . .	" King of Cadore " . . .	10,986
Argentiera . . .	Auronzo Mines . . .	3,419
Cadini, The . . .	Popena Valley . . .	9,787
Cadino . . .	Sorapiss Group . . .	8,704
Camin . . .	Boite Valley, Ampezzo . . .	8,809
Cinque-Torre . . .	Nuvolau Group . . .	7,986
Civetta . . .	Cordevole Valley . . .	10,722
Crepa . . .	(Belvedere) Cortina . . .	5,181
Crepedel . . .	Sorapiss Group . . .	7,833
Cresta Alta . . .	" " . . .	9,096
Cridola . . .	Above Lorenzago . . .	8,721
Cristallino . . .	Cristallo Group . . .	9,585
Cristallo . . .	Cortina . . .	11,000
Croda da Lago . . .	Nuvolau Group . . .	9,069
Dreischusterspitzen . . .	Schluderbach . . .	10,665
Duranno . . .	Piave Valley . . .	9,247
Dürrenstein . . .	Toblach . . .	9,335
Forcella Grande . . .	Between Marmarole and Sorapiss . . .	7,752
Forcella Piccola . . .	and Antelao . . .	7,222
Freddo, Col . . .	Croda Rossa Group . . .	9,211
Fuoco . . .	Sorapiss Group . . .	8,653
Knollkopf . . .	Schluderbach . . .	7,425
Landro, Sasso di . . .	Tofana Group . . .	8,171
Lares, Cima di . . .	Piave Valley . . .	9,035
Lavaredo, Tre Cime di . . .	Sorapiss Group . . .	10,000
Marcora, Croda . . .	(Cima del Froppa) . . .	10,304
Marmarole . . .	(Agordo and Caprile) . . .	10,560
Marmolada . . .	Pass into Carnia . . .	11,802
Mauria Pass . . .	Rocchetta Group . . .	4,431
Mezzodì Becco di . . .	Fort of Pieve . . .	8,674
Montericco . . .	Reinz Valley . . .	3,233
Neunerkofel . . .	Rocchetta Group . . .	8,795
Nuvolau . . .	" Throne of Cadore . . .	8,940
Pelmo . . .	Schluderbach . . .	9,504
Piana . . .	Cortina . . .	7,749
Pomagognon . . .	Cristallo Group . . .	7,729
Popena, Piz . . .	Sorapiss . . .	10,905
Rauhköfel . . .	Boite Valley . . .	6,767
Rocchetta . . .	Tofana Group . . .	8,002
Rosà, Col . . .	Felizon Valley . . .	7,297
Rossa, Croda . . .	Reinz . . .	10,574
Sarnköfel . . .	Rocchetta Group . . .	7,958
Sasso di Mezzodì . . .	Schluderbach . . .	8,674
Schwalbenköfel . . .	Cibiana . . .	9,025
Sfornioi . . .	Boite Valley . . .	8,130
Sorapiss . . .	Piave . . .	11,107
Spè . . .	Ansiei . . .	8,539
St. Angelo, Col . . .	" . . .	6,099
St. Dionysius . . .	Valle di Cadore . . .	7,000
Tofana . . .	Boite Valley . . .	11,033
Tre Croce, Pass of . . .	Piave Valley . . .	6,126
Tudaio . . .	Tai di Cadore . . .	8,407
Zucco . . .		4,107

GUIDES FOR ASCENSIONS AND EXCURSIONS.

I.—ITALIAN ALPINE CLUB.

(A.) AGORDO SECTION.

Guides.	Place.
EUGENIO CONEDERA, di Luigi	Agordo.
PIETRO CONEDERA, di Luigi	"
GIUSEPPE PRELORAN, fu Giovanni	Voltago.
TOMASO DAL COL, fu Matteo	Alleghe.
AGOSTINO SOPPELSA, fu Remigio	Caprile.
BATTISTA DELLA SANTA, fu Natale	"
CLEMENTE CALLEGARI	Rocca Pietore.
NEPOMUCENO DEL BUOS, fu Donato	Laste.
ANTONIO PELLEGRINI, di Pellegrino	Forno Canale.
GIACOMO FABIANI, fu Sebastiano	"
JOVANNI DE DORIGO	
PIETRO LORENZI, fu Giacomo	

TARIFFS.

Guides.	With Food.	Without Food.	Horses and Mules, Food and Stabling Included.	
F. C.	F. C.		F. C.	
3 50	5 0		5 0	
2 50	3 50		3 0	
For excursion of three } or more days, per day }	3 0	4 50	For return journey, } per day }	4 0
For each day of rest .	2 0	3 0	For muleteer, per day .	2 50
If a guide is dismissed } far from home, for return journey, per day . . . . .	...	3 50	For muleteer, per half- } day }	1 50
			For muleteer, return } journey, per day . . . }	2 0

N.B.—For ascensions of the first order, a fee, varying from 12 to 16 francs, is added to the above charges.

GUIDES FOR ASCENSIONS, &c.—*continued.*

I.—ITALIAN ALPINE CLUB.

(B.) AURONZO SECTION.

Guides.	Place.
LUIGI CASATELLI	San Vito.
GUISSEPPE PORDON	"
ARCANGELO PORDON	"
GUISSEPPE DE VIDO	"
GIO. BATTISTA ZANUCCO	"
ALESSANDRO DEL FAVERO, di Vicenzo	"
PACIFICO ZANDEGIACOMO-ORSOLINA	Auronzo.
VALENTINO ZANDEGIACOMO-ORSOLINA	"
CARLO ZANDEGIACOMO-ORSOLINA	"
FLORIANO VECELIO-NONE	"
GIO. BATTISTA TABACCHI	Sottocastello.
GIO. BATTISTA TOFFOLI	Calalzo.
GIOVANNI FRIGO-MOSCA, di Giovanni	Schluderbach.

TARIFFS.

Mountains.	Frs.	Mountains.	Frs.
Mount Ambata, Cima di	14	Mount Lavaredo, Tre { Cime di }	18
.. Antelao	15	.. Ligonto, Cima di	14
.. Cadini, Punta dei	10	.. Marmarole	18
.. Campo, Croda di	10	.. Padola, Cima di	14
.. Campoduro, } Cima di }	7	.. Pelmo	18
.. Civetta	18	.. Peralbo	12
.. Cridola	14	.. Popena, Piz.	18
.. Cristallino	12	.. Sorapiss	18
.. Cristallo	15	.. Zwölfköpfe	20

For a porter 6 francs a day; for an excursion 6 francs a day. When an excursion or ascension extends over one day, the tariff for each succeeding day shall be 6 francs. Guides and porters are bound to provide their own food and lodging.

GUIDES FOR ASCENSIONS, &c.—*continued.*

II.—GERMAN-AUSTRIAN ALPINE CLUB.

(C.) *CORTINA SECTION.*

Guides.	Place.
MANSUETO BARBARIA	Bigontina.
GOVANNI ZUCCHIN BARBARIA	”
GIUSEPPE PAOR COLLI	Cortina.
GIACOMO COLLI	Falzarego.
ANTONIO PIETRO CONSTANTINI	Cortina.
ARCANGELO DIBONA	Gillardon.
PIETRO DIMAI	Chiave.
ANTONIO DIMAI	”
SIMONE GHEDINA	Cortina.
ANGELO MALTO MENARDI	Val.
LUIGI MENARDI	Gillardon.
TOBIA MENARDI	Crignès.
CESARE SIORPAES	Cimabanche.
ANGELO ZANGIACOMI	Cortina.
ANTONIO MENARDI	”

TARIFFS.

Place.	Time.		Fare.	
	Days.	Hours.	Florins.	Kreuzers.
Sorapiss	2	...	12	50
Antelao by San Vito	1½	...	9	50
Croda da Lago ¹ . . . . .	...	12	12	0
Becco di Mezzodi . . . . .	...	9	5	50
Rocchetta ² . . . . .	...	8	4	50
Pelmo	1½	...	10	50
Civetta ³	(Going only)	3	18	50
Nuvolau (Alto) . . . . .	...	10	5	0
Cinque Torre . . . . .	...	8	4	0
Tofana (one peak) . . . . .	...	12	7	0
Croda Rossa . . . . .	...	16	10	0
Cristallo by Tre Croce . . . . .	...	12	7	0
Piz Popena . . . . .	...	14	9	50
Tre Croce—Misurina ² . . . . .	...	6	2	50
Tre Croce (Monte Piana) ² . . . . .	...	11	5	0
Cima de Lavaredo	1½	...	10	0
Cadini (Misurina) . . . . .	...	15	7	0
Dreischusterspitzen ³	(Going only)	3	14	50
Marmarole ³	”	2½	14	50
Marmolada—Campitello ^{2, 3}	”	3	14	50

¹ Two guides go with one tourist.² Two tourists may go with one guide.³ These being outside the *Distretto*, the return journey, if made with the tourist, is 4 florins, if without him, 2 florins 50 kreuzers.

N.B.—For every day not spent in climbing, the guide is paid 4 florins, and is bound to carry 20 lbs.—for every 2 lbs. extra, 5 kreuzers per hour; in first-class ascensions he carries but 11 lbs. Guides must find their own food and lodging.

The Italian Alpine Club Refuges.

THE two Mountain Refuges, of which pictures are given at pages 115 and 126, were erected by the Italian Alpine Club, Venice, for the comfort and safety of travellers. They are well stored with tinned soups, meats, tea, coffee, and other provisions, and also with wines and beer; and the prices are marked on each box or bottle. The "Venezia" has eight beds, and the "S. Marco" twenty-four, besides separate accommodation for guides. One franc is charged per person for the use of the Refuge, or two, if the night is passed there, besides half a franc for the use of the linen. Members of Alpine Clubs pay half these prices, and all guides are free. The Refuges are open during July, August, and September, and can be used during the rest of the year by means of the keys, which are in the possession of all the guides of the Italian, Tyrolian, Trentina, and Austrian Clubs.

The "Venezia," built in 1893, is placed on the saddle between the valleys of Zoldo and Cadore, on the alp of Rutorto, 2100 mètres above the sea, to facilitate the ascent of Pelmo, which is reached in four hours from the Refuge. From the Refuge to the Col del Ferro, in less than half-an-hour, by nearly level roads. Splendid panorama of the Valley of Cadore. Thence to the Sasso di Penna, in about two hours. Another stupendous

panorama, including the mountains of Zoldo. From Mount Val Zoldo the Refuge is reached by various ways, the chief one from Forno di Zoldo by a good mule path in less than four hours to the alp of Rutoro, and thence to the Refuge in half-an-hour by commodious paths marked in red. Another way is from Fusina, Forno Alto, by Carpa (one hour, very steep), or by Pianay ($1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, less steep) to Coy, the highest village in Venetia, thence by mule path to Rutoro in two hours, then half-an-hour to Refuge.

From the Val di Cadore the Refuge is reached by the Casera di Madier from Borca, or S. Vito, by easy paths marked in red, except the piece from Borca to the Casera, three hours road, from Borca a quarter of an hour more.

The "San Marco," built in 1895 by Messrs. Pasqualin & Vienna of Venice, is situated on the Col di Chi da Os, on the slopes of Bel Pra above S. Vito (Vallesella), and is intended to facilitate the ascension of Sorapiss, Croda Marcora, Bel Pra, Corno del Doge, Torre dei Sabbione, and Antelao. From S. Vito (Vallesella) one ascends by a commodious road marked in red by the Alpine Club, arriving in about two hours at the Refuge. From the Refuge two paths go off, the one by the Forcella Grande, which descends to Calalzo, and the other by the Forcella Piccola, which goes to the Bosco di S. Marco. From the Refuge by the Forcella Grande is five hours to Sorapiss, and four hours to Antelao, by a path made by the Alpine section, as far as the Forcella Piccola.

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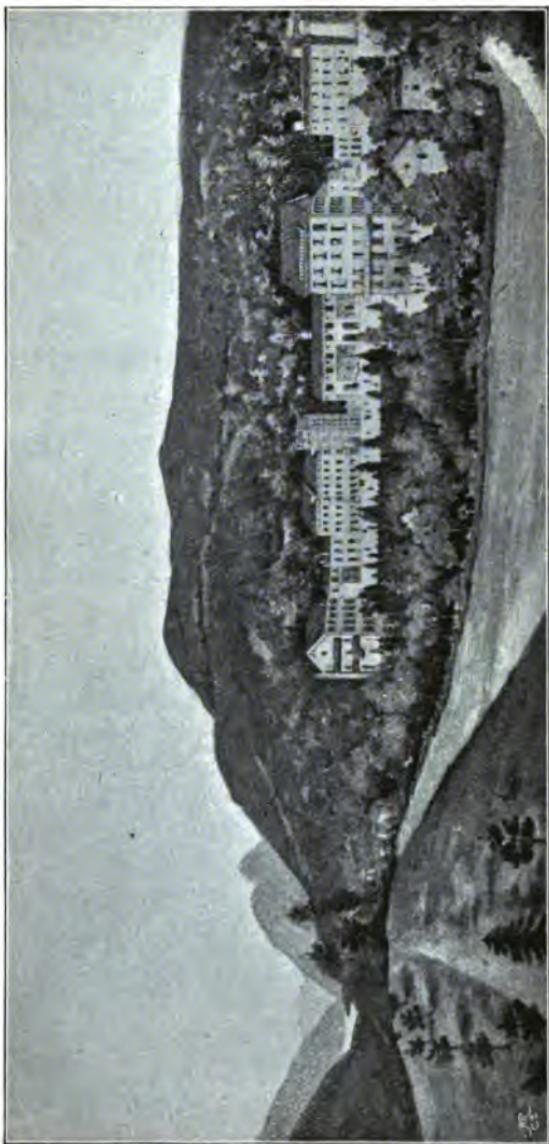
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